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AND YET I LIKE AMERICA



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<i>Harvest in the North</i>	<i>God's in His Heaven</i>
<i>Carnival at Blackport</i>	

## PLAYS

*Red Night*

*Nelson*

# AND YET I LIKE AMERICA

by

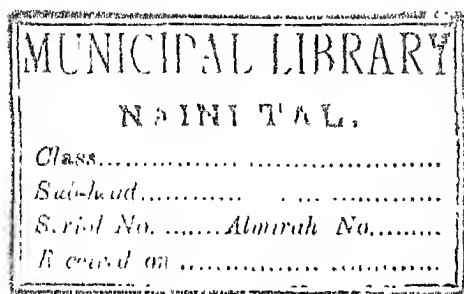
JAMES LANSDALE HODSON

Being Some Account of a Journey to the United  
States of America in the Winter and Spring of  
1943-1944 and of meetings there and of what  
was said to me

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*December, 1943.*

I AM IN A SHIP in the Atlantic heading for the United States, writing this sitting on a bed with stool as table. The bed is one of eight in two tiers, but, happily, only three are occupied—the other two by Ministry of Supply men, one a young New Zealander, a Ph.D. Our light is artificial and our air is conditioned—too warm, and lacking life. (Happily, when weather improved, we got portholes open.) The young doctor and I are proving indifferent sailors, and the saying that he who sleeps dines had some justification in us. Yet the sea does not appear rough—nothing approaching the 35 feet waves ruling last week.

When I came aboard the Chief Steward said: "Ah! I thought I might see you—you were in F.'s restaurant three days ago, weren't you?" In fact, I was not—I was four hundred miles away. This man thought he was certain. How many people are there like me wandering about? I have now been mistaken in my time for De Valera, Rory O'Connor (executed in Ireland), and told I look like Voltaire and the donor of the Chapter House at a Midlands cathedral—this from a carved physiognomy in that cathedral.

M. quoted to me an American newspaper-owner who said the other day when remonstrated with on his papers being unfair to the British: "All I care about at the moment is getting that fellow (Roosevelt) out of the White House."

We walked about the tender for four hours or so. The American Red Cross girls came with jugs of coffee and trays of circular buns—pretty girls saying, "Anybody want any more coffee?" American lads grabbed three or four of the buns. I've never seen our English lads looked after so well. At length we set off for this ship and I thought we should never find her. A lot of fine ships, but not this. Once or twice we stopped as though nonplussed. The old gentlemen on the bridge peered this way and that. Through a megaphone one shouted to a small tug, lit up with its red, green and white lights (for now it was passing dusk): "Do you know where she is?"

"Dunno—we're lookin' for her, too."

The American lads made great fun of this; and a Scots voice said: "We've lost the bluidy ship orl richt." But at last we came upon her. As we neared the ship its loud-speaker was

putting out the B.B.C. news—it was saying that it is now possible to cure cancer of the prostate gland!—a strange piece of news to greet us out of the darkness.

There was an English official who thought he was to cross on this ship and set off in what he thought was a tender. But the “tender” took him all the way to America. He was indignant, and being still annoyed when he got back to London, made a protest. “Oh,” said the M. of I. official, “what we sent you on was one of our nice little Norwegian opportunities.”

Voyaging in this ship is akin to travelling in a neutral country. Breakfast—two eggs and bacon, white rolls, fresh fruit, coffee. I ate my first orange for two years . . . no champagne could compare with it. American cigarettes are 1s. a hundred. In England a poorer cigarette costs 11s. 8d. a hundred. Good cigars are 11d. each, however. Coco-cola is 3d. This ship is dry. Men sit playing cards, sucking their coca-cola through straws. The lounge is terribly crowded—reminds me of Blackpool ball-room on a Bank Holiday. Last night we saw *Pride and Prejudice*—Hollywood’s notion of English life in Napoleon’s days. It makes a charming fairy-tale of English life; Mr. Bennett must have had a princely income (an M.G.M. income) to dress his daughters as he did. In this lounge we can smoke—not in our cabins, or alleyways. To broach a tenderer subject, being sick is difficult, too—or rather, finding the right place to be sick in. If you’re in your cabin, it’s well enough. But if you are caught in the dining-room and have to bolt (as I had) you emerge into a corridor that looks a mile long and you hurry along looking for a lavatory, but alas! you are not lucky. Each cabin has its own bathroom and so . . . Moreover, this ship is so superb that you are not expected to be sick; but the sea can make even this work of man’s hands look silly, and me sillier. I think I am past the worst. I have been living on apples and dry rolls, a monk-like, abstemious life; no smoking, early to bed, indeed, more in bed than out.

A sign in red: “Wanted for murder—the idiots who talk of ship movements, etc., etc.” We saw a film last night called *Chatterbugs*, the burden of which is the same. Excellent.

Our New Zealander has been talking to me about his country. I asked him how many she could absorb (for N.Z. is the size of the British Isles, and parts of it are still unexplored. He himself was engaged in that work just before the war). He said:

"We've got a million and a half, and it's generally thought we could rise to five millions. We'd like men who're good farming stock, your British yeomen, but I know there aren't too many of 'em. I wouldn't like New Zealand to be industrialised; we've got lots of coal, but it would be absurd in my view to spend time being industrial when we can grow food so admirably." He talked of salmon, and the fashion in which they've been known to kill themselves trying to jump what they cannot jump; and of how you can make a tree bear fruit by cutting at its root—the tree, he said, appears to have a self-preservation instinct, and when its life is threatened will pour out fresh life in the shape of a crop. I asked him what he thought of their Labour Government. He said they went in without his vote, but he thinks that, taken in the round, they've done a good job. Their opponents called them the "Borrow, squander and bust" lot, and they certainly came near to busting (he said) for their public works projects were bold and needed a lot of money, and their taking office coincided or resulted in New Zealand investment stocks falling to a low price. They instituted a forty-hour week—a great boon, he thinks, for townspeople, since these now finish work on Friday and a great exodus follows to the countryside for the week-end. Farmers are not so happy about it—you can't easily farm land on a forty-hour week. The Labour Government developed social security too—indeed, he thought the Beveridge Report read as though modelled to some degree on what New Zealand is doing.

The loud-speaker on this ship is used too much. A passion for broadcasting develops. The whole ship is told that Captain or Private So-and-So must report at this or that office at once. An Air Commodore said to me yesterday: "They ought to be made to pay five pounds every time they use it." I concur.

At seven-thirty this morning we opened the portholes. A lovely warm morning like an English June. The sea is still grey, but a little blue lies in it and in the sky also. I didn't bargain for this delight.

One stumbles on strange little bits of news of this war. A merchant captain tells me that when in Murmansk one of his lads lost a finger during unloading. Later, when they lay out at anchor a woman doctor came aboard to attend him. "During the time when we were tied up at the quay," he said, "no Russian would accept even a cigarette—they seemed seared. Now, however, I asked the lady doctor if she'd like

a cup of tea. She said, 'Ycs.' The steward brought in a plate of sandwiches, too. I've never seen anybody wolf them as she did. So I sent for another plateful, thicker ones this time. She ate those, too; and she drank five cups of tea." I asked if she did the doctoring well. He said, "Yes, quite well."

Last night *Coastal Command* was shown in the lounge—projected from a diminutive portable apparatus that involved halts between reels. I think this a fine film, but some of the R.A.F. lads were critical—pointed out that the *flak* came from one of our ships purporting to be the enemy, that Beaufort fighters never come in to attack in line astern, as in the film, that much of the film was not shot, in their view, on actual "ops." Um. The truth is, I think, that no war documentary of battle can be made with absolute integrity and truth. You cannot, for example, photograph much of a battle on land—all that you usually see is a lot of smoke and tiny figures somewhere in the distance. You can get individual shots, and piece them together. But some reconstruction is inevitable if the story is to be properly told. A short part of *Desert Victory*, and this not the least effective, was reconstructed. The battle of Hill 609 in the new Tunisian film was "shot" by the Americans in America. I suspect a good deal of the naval bombardment off Casablanca was done when a long way from sudden death too! There are two schools of thought: the first says: "Preserve integrity—make it real. Use the stuff shot by the photographers with the troops and *only* that—even if the resultant picture is poor. Keep the reconstructed stuff down to, say, 5 per cent. of the whole. We realise the picture may lose something that a lot of 'fake' material would give it, but integrity counts higher than that." The other school says: "Make a good picture. If your 'real' stuff isn't good enough, fake some that's better. The result is all that counts." This second, as I understand it, is the American view, and the Anglo-U.S.A. picture of the Tunisian campaign pretty well conforms to it. And the result? Well, I think it's a good picture—it is at once something more and something less than *Desert Victory*. It certainly lacks the truth and austerity of *D.V.*

I have been spending an hour with the captain. He has a sense of humour. On his first voyage as a boy he was sick. He said: "They gave me the rough-and-ready cure of making me drink a pint of sea water. I was pretty ill for twenty minutes—after that, all right, and I've never been sick since." He took me

to the topmost bridge—a glorious view of the far, tumbling grey seas. I said it looked flat, but he said it was, in fact, a rough sea with a heavy swell. He left me with the officer of the watch and went below to “find out where we are.” Towards the ship brown seaweed was drifting, torn from the sea bottom. I said: “We seem to be alone in the world—I’ve seen no ship, no smoke on the horizon, no sign of life, not a sea bird.” The young officer replied: “There are some birds, but you have to look close to the surface of the water to catch a sight of them. And we saw an aircraft this morning.” We talked of rough weather. He said: “You see that forrard Oerlikon; it weighs about four tons, but I’ve seen it broken off and thrown into the air, and those two boats in the well there—well, in heavy seas they’re turned into matchwood. Those two have lasted longer than most. For three months we’ve had good weather. I’ve known the time when standing in the far extremity of the bridge we’ve rolled so that I’ve seen the horizon on the far side.” The horizon on a clear day may be twenty miles off; on a clear dark night, he said, you can have an horizon distant three or four miles, and when the moon rises one of seven or eight miles.

He belongs to the North-east Coast, and began life in tramp ships. He has his master’s ticket. Pre-war, he said, every deck officer on a ship such as this would have that ticket. It isn’t so now. He has shared the bridge, he said, with a man who has no more than his second mate’s ticket, and that only a few weeks old. His own tramp ship once worked for a Japanese company. I inquired how he got along with the Japs. He said he liked them, had many good friends among them, but the time came when it was no longer safe to go ashore—the Japs had swung towards the Germans. That was by 1936 or so. “The idea that the Japs are all poker-faced and have no feelings is all tommy-rot. I’ve watched them going off for military training—their wives and girls crying their eyes out just the same as any others do. Give the Japs a pep talk and you can sway them away any road you like.” I asked if he found them straightforward. He said: “Well, this sticks in my memory. I was second mate at the time, and one morning in a Jap port when the captain was away a Jap policeman came along bringing a woman in uniform with him. He wanted the ship’s company mustered—she wanted to identify somebody. I thought some of our chaps had been up to mischief, but I had no alternative but to muster them. She picked out the mess-boy and a cabin-boy—lads on their first voyage. But it turned out she wanted to return some money to them! They had travelled on a tramcar she was



conductor of, and they had given her a piece of money in a note she couldn't at that moment change. She took the note and said she would change it when she could, but when she got back to where they had sat, they had left. So she had gone to the police and, with them, had come to the harbour next day looking for the two boys. She wasn't sure they were even British, and the harbour was full of ships. Do you know any other country where that would have happened? Darned if I do. Of course, I hate the Japs now." I've just finished reading John Morris's *Traveller from Tokyo*. Morris was a lecturer at a Tokyo university and did not leave Japan till the middle of 1942. He, too, had some good friends among the people, some of whom stuck to him to the last. But he is in no doubt as to the need for destroying their military cult and even of occupying the country after their defeat. They will not, in his view, crack as Germany will crack. It is a good book—he has a sharp eye for the humorous, e.g. the Japanese habit of numbering houses haphazardly so that more than one in the same street bears the same number, and of treating private telephones as public property. What is encouraging is that the Japs soon imagine they have mastered a subject and thereupon launch out on their own. If this is so, it seems to me quite certain that long before the war is over we shall have far outstripped them in quality of weapons. I wonder, for instance, how their radio-location is getting on? I am told that our own mastery of the U-boat will continue to grow, that in another month or so we shall be making fresh strides and that by next March the U-boats will be finally vanquished. This sounds too cheerful a view to be true, but Germany and Japan are not our equals in inventive capacity, Germany having banished some of her best brains, which were Jewish or otherwise anti-Nazi. Imagine German brains trying to hold their own against those of our Commonwealth, America, Russia and the other Allies! And imagine also the intoxicated madness of the Japs thinking they could conquer the world—this comparatively small nation who, seventy years ago, built her first railway! Yet there is reasonable ground for thinking she did, indeed, plan world conquest and left no backdoor exit.

The day continues warm. The ship itself warms up swiftly from the sea, but the moment may come when the sea temperature will change within fifteen minutes from, say, seventy-two degrees to forty-eight degrees and cold will sweep across like a keen wind. In this rough sea the ship's bow rises and falls some ten feet, but in rough weather it would lift and dip fifty

feet and the rigging seem to jump up and down the sky. Putting the rigging against the horizon with your eye is a good method of seeing what the ship is doing.

Sidelight on war: a ship's captain aboard took back to England many presents, including six dozen eggs. He couldn't get a taxi at the English port and finally dumped his parcels, went home, changed into an old suit, took out the perambulator and went to fetch his presents, wheeling them home. All his family were down with 'flu except his mother, who was given up by the doctors twenty years ago, but is still going strong, and was the only person up and doing in the house at that moment!

View of old sea captain: "It's the ozone in the air that inclines women aboard to love-making."

The ship's doctor tells me he thinks he'll settle in Australia after the war, though he doubts if the Aussies like us much—he thinks we've too often sent the wrong sort of people. He spoke very highly of New Zealand people's kindness. Arriving there in a cargo ship a few months ago, every member of the crew was given two pounds of butter besides other gifts.

Our troops' relations with the Americans would be improved, I think, if the Americans drew the same pay as our men when in Britain or the European theatre of war, and had the remainder banked at home. A Scots cook said to me last night: "I've seen 'em ashore pullin' rolls o' notes oot their pockets and payin' three poond ten for a bottle o' whisky. Our fellas canna do it and it doesna go doon well." One of our Washington Embassy staff said to me: "Not till they had seen *Desert Victory* did it get under their skin that British soldiers in this war can fight. But it was largely our own fault for letting the case go by default." Another official working in Washington: "I'd say the average American isn't pro-British." Doubtless, they're pro-American, as they have every right to be. After I had left Dublin some two years ago, an Eire Public Relations man said to a friend of mine: "Hodson isn't a bad sort of chap, but he's terribly pro-British!"

Captain's phrase, looking out of his cabin window at the sky: "I want to find a few stars, to see just where we are." A sight of the sun was taken at 12.15 when I was on the bridge. Despite new gadgets, the old sextant, sun and stars are a seaman's tools, though I'm told the time is rapidly approaching when a captain

will be able to call up a station ashore and say, "Just give me my position, will you?" and navigation will be child's play. Um.

I am reading Walter Lippman's book, *U.S. Foreign Policy*. His theme is the need for such a policy which, he argues, America has lacked for about a century. He condemns her custom of undertaking commitments which she has not the resources either in arms or alliances to fulfil; thus has she found herself involved in two great wars. What emerges (according to Lippmann) is that U.S.A., under President Monroe and long after, had in reality an understanding with Britain under which America relied on the British Navy as an ally, but that the American people were never told of this and have never realised it. They were led to believe that their own strong right arm was powerful enough, that allies were a menace and an entanglement. This failure (in my view) of statesmen and politicians to tell their people the truth (as exemplified in Baldwin's failure to tell us how Germany was re-arming and what it meant) is a root cause of the world's disasters. Truth is looked on by these men as dangerous; but its dangers are as nothing to the dangers into which their silence and want of courage lead us. Lippmann writes with a beautiful clarity—reminds me in that of Norman Angell.

The O.C. troops is an American Colonel with facial resemblances to Eisenhower. He does the job well, is friendly, firm, unfussy. This morning when boat drill was sounded and all traffic had to be upwards, I was without mackintosh or hat and wanted to go downstairs to procure them. He walked over to me as I stood pondering, and showed me a small staircase I hadn't hitherto known, the use of which enabled me to circumvent the order, "No going downwards." Admirable. Thus are Anglo-American relations improved. But this whole British ship, finely efficient, with its air of complete security, is what the purser calls a floating ambassador. And so it is. An American Admiral aboard spends an hour on the bridge from time to time with our English captain.

Every night the clocks go back an hour. The officer on the bridge said to me, smiling: "So I'm in bed before I've come off watch." Nothing like a sea voyage for teaching us a little geography. Flying is playing ducks and drakes with it, too. Chicago isn't far from Moscow if you fly over the Pole. Russia is in a dominant position, looking at the world with an airman's

eyes. I trust our world statesmen realise it. They've seldom been good up to now at realising the changing world!

Story of British Tommy in Egypt, where railway stations are sometimes marked in English and also in Arabic, which is an ornate tongue. At this station he saw only the Arabic. "Lumme!" he said. "They've written it in music."

I've been enjoying discussion with a film executive who asserts that not until we British are able to do without the Americans' moncy and meet them on level terms will our own film trade be sound and thriving. "Formerly," he said, "the Americans were towards us as the Devil was with the peasant. The Devil said: 'We will make a bargain; we will share the proceeds. I will take all above ground and you, all below.' So it was agreed. The first year the peasant grew whcat—so the Devil took all the crop. The peasant growled. 'Very well,' said the Devil, 'next year I will take all below ground.' This time the peasant grew potatoes. So it has been (he said) with us and the Americans. We were not able to go into the really big American cinemas with our films. But in the 75,000 smaller ones, a film of ours lately took 1,400,000 dollars. Of that, we got only about 400,000 dollars. So now I go to America to try and arrange that in future we get, say, a million of the 1,400,000." I said I was tickled at the thought of one lot of racketeers diddling the other lot. This man, amusing, well-informed, is not English, but Polish. Korda is by birth Hungarian. Another British film magnate is Italian. We English are addicted to believing no English can do the job—which is nonsense.

We talked of authors' fees. Now, authors are well-paid by film-makers, but usually ill-paid in comparison with the actors. Quite often a film actor who is not by any means the first star of the picture draws more than the author, while the star actor and actress may receive ten times as much. Yet without the author they are nothing. He agreed, saying: "Yes, as Shakespeare said, 'The play is the thing.' " The author is as strong as his pocket and his determination, allied to the film company's desire for his work. We saw *In which We Serve*, Coward's film, last night. Coward intended we should know it was his. His name appears in the titles about nine times—so often that the audience tittered.

I said that I couldn't imagine any author worth tuppence devoting more than a few months of a year to films because (a) so many cooks have a hand in the broth, which is no way

for an artist to work, and (b) so many film-makers are terrified of having a failure that if even the office boy says he doesn't like or doesn't understand the script, the film producer is panic-stricken. This terror of having a failure creates a state of nerves which is both contemptible and makes for bad pictures. You might as justifiably ask the chorus girls whether they like *Hamlet* and, if they don't, throw *Hamlet* away.

He said: "Did you hear of the film producer to whom the author, after much agony and sweat, brought his script? The producer took it in his hand and weighed it, but didn't read a word of it. 'Ah,' he said, 'I can see it will need much alteration—very, very much alteration.'" He added that he believes Hollywood's fear of the box office and subservience to it will destroy Hollywood. This is a romantic notion, I think. He had a story of Goldwyn new to me, but maybe old, since Goldwyn stories are as those from Aberdeen. Goldwyn, having with him his small son, listened to the outline of a film treatment and protested he couldn't understand it. The writer said it was simplicity itself. Goldwyn still said he didn't understand it. Whereupon the writer turned to the small boy and asked: "Do *you* understand it?" The boy said: "Of course." But Goldwyn wasn't done. "Since when," he inquired blandly, "are we making films for children?"

For the first time I see our men wearing the 1939-43 ribbon. I asked the Chief Officer whether the Merchant Navy is entitled to it? He said he thinks so, but doesn't imagine any seaman is troubling about it. This is typical of merchant seamen.

I spent an hour among the ship's engines, going down as far as the propeller shaft. We were now 150 feet below the bridge. A blanket, tied with thin rope, lay across the revolving shaft. This was the cleaner's ingenious device for cleaning the shaft. He leaves the blanket in position while he does some other job, returns and moves the blanket a little further along. This homely device, in the midst of this triumph of mechanism, struck me as most comic. Also most splendid—a refusal to be overawed. But *I* was overawed. Two mysteries among many remain for me: how propellers so small can drive a ship so mighty, and how an anchor so small can hold her. Engines, I'm told, work best when the sea water is cold—the cold helps condensation.

As I walked along a dim, shut-in deck last night an American soldier pulled up. "Say, fellah, give me a light," he said.

*December, 1943.*

This is Sunday morning. We've had an English-American service in the lounge. Two candles were lit, and behind them stood the flags of America and England and one bearing a Red Cross. Two chaplains, one American, one British, took the service, and an American soldier played the piano. He was at a loss, apparently, what to open the service with, so he played "Sweet and Low." I found the service moving at times. When The English chaplain prayed for "Our Sovereign Lord the King" he added "and the President of the United States." Twice we prayed for these two men. At the close, we sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and then our National Anthem. Not so many sang the first as sang the second, for few of us know the American anthem. We had better set about learning it. It was altogether more lightly and more tunelessly sung than ours. Remembering how it came to be written, by an American prisoner standing on a British warship bombarding an American fort, a man who, when the smoke blew away, found that the American flag was still unfurled in the breeze and was moved to write the words, and now for us to sing it side by side with Americans, was a stirring moment. The American padre preached. He was a youngish man—say, thirty-eight. Nobody could call him eloquent, but he had a simplicity and sincerity that was likeable. I should judge him a Nonconformist, but he wore a gown of black with a red band across the neck. He spoke of Christmas and of men at this service going home, and said, "God bless you as you go." He said they had crossed the world to fight, so that something nearer to what Christ wanted might be achieved, but that this peace must first begin in the hearts of men; he seemed to doubt if the peace could be reached round a conference table.

A doctor of law who spent six months in plaster as a result of a motor accident described to me what happened. "Two stationary motor-lorries blocked the road. We were doing sixty miles an hour. It was late at night. We saw the lights of the lorry facing us—these, when we dimmed our lights, were dimmed in return. What we did not see was the small red rear light of the second stationary lorry, the driver of which had stopped to speak to the other lorry. Suddenly I saw this small red light coming fast towards us. I was in the back of the car. I shouted 'Stop!' Then it was as if a bottle of champagne had been opened! Everything rushed upwards and overwhelmed us. The driver was pushed back in his seat till he was wedged up against

me with the wheel in his chest. My knee was broken, my ribs broken." I asked if he had felt frightened. He said he thought not or only for a second while he shouted "Stop!" Nor does he remember feeling any pain at that time—that only came when he was being driven in an ambulance and the jolting of the vehicle hurt the knee. The worst thing, he said, was holding up the injured driver, from whose mouth blood continued to fall. He took his law degree in Kiev. A condition of it was that he must first defend in a criminal case. He was Leftist then and entered the case with enthusiasm. He sought to prove that the prisoner—charged with theft—was the victim of environment and heredity—that because his father had been a thief, the young man was not really responsible, etc. But alas! it worked ill. The judge said if the prisoner's antecedents were as bad as that, he was obviously better in prison than out, and instead of giving him three months as he had at first intended, he now gave him twelve! That finished off the young lawyer—he never pleaded again.

Our British films are being made, so to speak, largely with Government money. With taxes so high, you may as well spend lavishly on production, for your profits, anyhow, go almost wholly to the Treasury. This is leading, at the moment, to money being squandered. Does a picture cost a quarter of a million? Very well, it costs a quarter of a million. One is being made on which £350,000 is being spent. This dismays the sensible, and with cause. For this expenditure will not be recouped for a year or more, and who knows what rivals the cinemas will have by that time? If the war in Europe is over and the black-out raised, if racing has begun once more, and country walks, and sports and hiking are in vogue, the cinemas' revenue will drop. Moreover, habits of waste and squander are not easily eradicated. The shrewd are fearful that the English cinema industry will once again nose-dive to depression.

*December 21st, 1913.*

It was 9.30 a.m. when I saw New York. Douglas Fairbanks, Junr., at the next table (he's a Lieut.-Commander in the U.S. Navy and has been twice on convoy to Murmansk) had leaned over to tell my companion that in ten minutes the finest view of New York would loom up. When I got on deck it was bitterly cold, with a thin wind like a sword. The view on the left might have been any water-front, scattered, half-industrial, low-lying—tall chimneys and gasometers there. Not what I had expected.

But presently I heard muffled cheering from our U.S. lads aboard and now I saw the Statue of Liberty, a green lady not so high and not so symmetrical as I expected. This was the view on the port side. I walked over to starboard. A wintry sun was coming through mist and suddenly the air was vibrant as Switzerland, and in some curious way the atmosphere was also that of intoxicating holiday, so that I was delighted to be there. And one saw the authentic New York—the picture that has caught at the heart of countless hosts of men. But these slender skyscrapers held among them spires I hadn't bargained for, so that, as a Polish friend said, it was as though an enormous Warwick Castle had been modernised—a bastion-like effect was created. Very high on the left was a building with a half-Grecian front and a red pennant flying on top. They were tall, these buildings, yet the height seemed by no means fantastic, but rather as though anything shorter would have looked stumpy against that expanse of sky and water. One or two ferry-boats fussed about with their showboat and Victorian air, and the entire scene had a touch of the old-world. Just as I once felt in Rome that I was coming home, so I felt that here also; and I had a little of the other strange feeling—that I had been here before. During the morning we were examined by "security" immigration men. It was well done. We sat in the lounge and when our turn came walked across to a table round which three men—some naval, some civilian—sat. What was I coming to U.S.A. for? Was I a British Government official? Was I going to lecture? (They all seem relieved that I'm not.) My own examination was brief and courteous. But a Czech passenger complained that he was asked: "What were your feelings when the Germans marched into Prague?" To which he countered by asking what would theirs be if Hitler marched into New York? A Pole told me he had been asked his history for the past fifteen years. But who can blame the Americans? This is the most mixed land in the world, and surely the most difficult to keep an eye on. (The Pole surprised the emigration folk in England by having permission to spend 400 dollars a week on expenses. I, personally, am limited to spending a hundred, yet I doubt if he's four times as important to the war effort as the rest of us.) The official who examined my bags was a Negro—admirable and thorough at his job. Nothing escaped him. I drove to my New York hotel in a yellow-and-red taxi along roads with a wide and empty look but also a new look, as though this city—or this part of it—had sprung up no great time ago; reminded me of South Africa and also of towns in



mid-Europe. There was a touch of old-world courtesy about the taxi-man's "Thank you, *sir*" and that of the receptionist, and about the men-servants. This is a modest hotel—3½ dollars for this bedroom, yet I found pushed through a large letter-box in my bedroom early this morning a cardboard box with a thermos flask of coffee, cream, marmalade and two rolls. An amusing thing—on my dressing-table is a printed note telling me that a black-out is something that takes place at night, but an air-raid alarm may take place day or night. In black-outs I am asked to remain quietly in my room, not to use the telephone, to turn out all lights, plug in the radio and listen for instructions, to be calm and await further alarm signals. If the air-raid alarm goes, I am to collect my valuables, step into the corridor, go to the stairway and sit down on the first available step. When the "All Clear" goes I am to return to my room and resume normal life. These instructions are some minor indication of how far New York is from the war. The city at one time had a "dim-out." There is none now that I can see. As I stood in an office on the forty-fourth floor of the Rockefeller Plaza Building last evening—it has eighty stories in all—the blue dusk faded and lights came into the nearby Chrysler skyscraper and others. It was a pretty sight, too much like a fairyland maybe to deserve the word "beauty"; but unique in my eyes. Before darkness fell the view was superb. Below us was St. Patrick's Cathedral as large and fine as that of Cologne, yet it looked puny beside the Chrysler Building, which achieves something like a twisting turban with a long spire; the Lexington Hotel ends in a medley of what resemble zigzag lightning conductors; on two sides of the city the broad river runs and, seemingly in the city's midst, lies a bluish lake. You can dwell upon that view as one looks at a fine painting, drinking it in. But to look down vertically is too much for me. In front of this Rockefeller Centre I came on a scene that might have been Vienna pre-war, a frozen rink of ice and skaters cutting figures to music. In the streets are artificial Christmas trees with shining ornaments; shops are gay; men and women are going about with parcels; over cocktails of Jamaica rum, professional men discussed the tips they would give—one said his block of apartments has over twenty doormen, dustbin men, etc., and his tips would reach fifteen English pounds. Talk was lively. We drank too many cocktails and went on to dine. The menu was astonishing to English eyes. The choice was lavish indeed: half a dozen kinds of *hors d'œuvre*, several soups, a score of *entrées* and so forth. Already one realises how difficult it is

to remember the war at this remove. But the restaurant was by no means full and before we left it was empty, and it was not yet 11 p.m. The wind outside was icy. Before cocktails I had rushed back to change my clothes. I was wearing a tweed suit and the warmth indoors was insupportable. This violent transition from great heat indoors to bitter cold outside is trying. One needs summer suits, and a fur coat for venturing forth; but alas! one doesn't have them.

Story of the Air Marshal inspecting fighter pilots. He observed that they had adopted the fad of keeping the top button of their tunics unfastened and was told it was the mark of the fighter pilots as distinct from bombers. Presently he saw that one had his fly-buttons undone. "Ah!" he quoth. "Night fighter, I suppose."

Talking to me about Anglo-American relations, an astute observer said to-day that as one moves about America one observes very little anti-British feeling because the Americans' hospitality outweighs any animosity and, moreover, that while Americans may not like Britain very much or what they think she stands for, they usually like individual Britishers and are glad to meet them. Conversely, while British people in Britain feel warm towards America, they don't feel so cordial towards individual Americans. I doubt, however, if the facts justify so concrete a statement, interesting though the view is. The Americans, this observer said (and others agreed with him), have mixed feelings on the point of our allegedly out-smarting them; one group are pleased to look on themselves as simple folk who take pride in that, seeing simplicity as the stamp of virtue; others feel they've been bested at their own game and half admire us for beating them. (I, an Englishman, find the notion of our out-smarting the Yanks rather comic.) This group thought Willkie sincere, though perhaps a little naïve judged by some of his remarks in *One World*. They thought Roosevelt's administration is doing some bungling administratively. They see no Democratic candidate in sight except Roosevelt, and mention the notion that Roosevelt might, however, serve under another President as Secretary for Foreign Affairs and work as such during the Peace Conference, if and when there is one. With Congress and Senate largely against him, it may be best for the world's future that Roosevelt should not serve a fourth term. But it is in home affairs that some of the gravest problems lie—both in the Negro question, and in

labour matters. Great strife is visualised post-war. What's going to happen in Detroit when the war boom ends? they wonder.

A literary agent has been enlightening me on New York life. Some restaurants now close one day a week to conserve supplies. Scotch whisky within the past two months has become very scarce and is 50 per cent. up in price—32s. a bottle. More cars are on the streets than two months ago because more black market petrol has appeared (the legal allowance to the ordinary man is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  gallons a week). Paper supplies are to be cut further, but as the *New York Times* and *Herald-Tribune* are to-day forty-four and thirty-four pages respectively, that will, I think, be no great hardship. Prices of most articles are rising. He described this as the craziest Christmas for spending he has known, which follows the fact that—having raised the nation's output by 60 per cent. above pre-war—Americans are earning four thousand billion dollars a month more than pre-war, half of which, after taxes are paid, is left in their pockets to spend. Theatres and cinemas boom, trains are crowded, folk are trying to eat more, and the supply of food for export dwindles. As an offset to this, there are six millions of people in the United States living in houses or shacks with no sanitary conveniences, and you can find "poor whites" within two miles of where I write these notes.

In New York cinemas pictures of Mr. Churchill occasionally receive more applause than those of the President.

On the ice rink under the sky just off Fifth Avenue, a choir was signing carols to-day. Behind, stood a Christmas tree fifty feet high laden with balloons.

*December 22nd, 1943.*

The American columnist can be more important than the journal's leader column. Walter Lippman is political. Walter Winchell is raciness, wit and sensation. To-day he mentions Earl Wilson of the stay-up-late set who interviewed a cabby who drove the Duke of Windsor. Winchell says: "The cabby quoted the Dook as saying: 'Hitler is an educated man. Loves his people. He's done a lot of good but it got into his head.' That (says Winchell) confirms a suspicion many of us had a long time ago about the Dook and his ambitious spouse." He quotes the *Washington Times* correspondent as thinking it un-American for Roosevelt to have signed the Big-3 Declarations with the word Roosevelt devoid of initials. I think so, too.

Old-world courtesy isn't universal. I'm wearing a fleecce lining under my overcoat. When, in a restaurant, I was putting my coat into the cloak-room, the girl attendant snapped: "How many coats you got?"

I walked out of Rockefeller Building with a secretary. In a public lobby on the ground floor, he posted some parcels, but two were outsize. He placed them on the floor for the postman to pick up. Crowds of people were passing. I showed surprise. He said: "I guess we wouldn't do it in the street, but here it's all right."

Had some drinks at a bar with an American publisher. Our first two were bought for us by the bartenders as a Christmas gesture. Among the pieces of information vouchsafed were that Roosevelt is the best politician of all time in U.S.A., Abraham Lincoln being a weazle by comparison; that Roosevelt is a first-class hater and uses strong language in private; that American people are unmoral and look on rationing as a form of cheating; that he himself has only four bottles of Scotch for Christmas. In the same block of apartments in New York (he said) you can have a man paying 2,000 dollars rent living next door to one paying only 300 dollars. He added that Americans are illiterate. However, the book business, he conceded, is doing well—sales up about 40 per cent., and America is now buying sixty million books a year, apart from technical books. If the Book Club takes a book, that may result in a sale of 300,000 copies, and if another book club, second in importance, takes it, that means 175,000; so that an author who is fortunate may, with one book, make a reasonable fortune—especially if the films buy the rights. Movie rights are now rising to 100,000 dollars for such a book. For an article of 5,000 words, the *Readers' Digest* occasionally pays 1,800 dollars—which is far more than many a good book in Britain ever earns.

An American woman who runs a printing business joined us; she inherited the business and, as the machinery, second-hand, promised to fetch but little if she sold up, she has been running it for some years. She has two boys in the Army and Navy and is disgusted at the growls of those whose part in the war consists of merely paying taxes. She has—curiously for a business woman—developed Leftist tendencies, and thinks the Negroes get a raw deal. She said: "The asylums are full of whites, but there are very few Negroes who're lunatics. That says something,

doesn't it?" Added that she constantly meets business men who make 25,000 dollars a year and have no intelligence at all; suggests they ought to undergo intelligence tests every five years and, if they don't pass, be thrown out of their jobs. (But if it's their own business, what then?) She looked hard-worked, rather drawn, was painted and scented and with long, dark-red finger-nails. I see girls whose whole faces are painted the colour of sand; horrible. People say to me, "The tenseness of life in New York is awful."

Statement by another business man of Liberal mind: "American Big Business is going to make you British pay for everything this time. Last war, they didn't know how to do it; now they know. The fight for the oil in the East is going to be hell. Henry Wallace is one of our biggest men, but the 'realists' say that what he talks is just 'milk for Hottentots.' Isolationism is certainly dead—the fight now is between American imperialism and idealism. Willkie isn't really a very bright guy—so the smart women say, who know him well. If Roosevelt stands again, I think he'll get in."

Two British observers here tell me that our strong suits with the Americans are (a) Winston Churchill, (b) the R.A.F., (c) the Eighth Army, (d) Montgomery. Everything in America is personalised. An attempt was made to call General Alexander "Alexander the Great," but it didn't come off. Before El Alamein the Yanks thought our soldiers were yellow. We must have done our information job very ill to permit them to gain that idea; of course, Axis agents have been very active.

An Englishman who has just concluded a tour of the Middle West said to me: "They have the common attitude to foreigners—and we are foreigners—the attitude of 'He's a foreigner. Throw half a brick at him.' But that attitude is alleviated by an abounding hospitality and much warmth of heart. They don't always throw the brick very hard and sometimes don't throw it at all."

Sumner Welles declares to-day that when a new world organisation is created, Americans will demand, he hopes, that its members must grant their own peoples the right to enjoy freedom of religion, of speech and of information; in other words, he says that an unshackled Press is vital to peace. He goes on to say that the German people have been deprived of the truth over a long period. He doesn't mention the absence

of freedom of speech and writing in Russia, except by implication. Too tender a subject, no doubt.

*December 24th, 1943.*

This is the coldest day I remember since Berlin in the winter of 1932. Dry, bitter. I spent last evening with a Jewish art critic and a woman publisher. They wouldn't allow me to pay for anything. I said I'd like to dine American, so we went down Broadway and into a glorified popular restaurant—fittings of clean wood, mural paintings, crowded, bright, cosy, pleasant. But the wine we chose! Claret by name, it smelled as though distilled from flowers; couldn't drink it. We talked about America. He's been in the Army and discharged on health grounds; said the officers are often poorish—they get ninety days' training and are called 'Ninety days' wonders.' He added that the Americans haven't got convictions in the pit of their stomachs about this war, as he believes that the Russians and we British have (but not all the British have, either). Anyhow, it's unsatisfactory to generalise about men and about war. In the afternoon I talked with two British men who know America reasonably well. They said they feel that in U.S.A. everybody points a gun at everybody else, that fear is rampant—fear of coming a cropper financially, fear of ending in the gutter. They think that a boom will follow this war and next a slump, and that in that slump violence will rear its head—riots concerning Negroes, riots concerning Jews, violent trade-union disputes. We have some anchors in Britain that U.S.A. is short of; we've old-established trades unions, and we've a high respect for law and order. America has neither. We are teaching our soldiers to think socially and politically in our A.B.C.A. scheme. America has nothing approaching A.B.C.A. America has been building up a great bureaucracy of 300,000 to administer the New Deal, etc. We've had something of this sort of bureaucracy a long time. In the American slump suffering was brutal—they had no dole, and no system of social security, though they have now. Wall Street is described to me as wanting to run the whole world on a kind of benevolent American imperialism.

An interesting point—you seldom find in U.S.A. writers who are both novelists, or dramatists and journalists. The pace here is too fast. If you're a journalist, then you're a journalist—you've no time or energy to write other things. A lot of the journalism is very thorough—they get down to the facts (or seem to). And they hit very hard—personal hitting some of it. Yesterday *P.M.* had a heading: "This isn't bunk although O'Donnell said it"

(O'Donnell being a New York *Daily News* writer). The implication was that what O'Donnell says usually is bunk. Another paper geyed the Hearst Press's handling of a Washington statement that America may have up to half a million casualties in the next three months.

Turning to another aspect, I like the kindly way waiters say, "You're welcome" or "You're welcome, I'm sure" when you thank them. Conversely, when I was calling a taxi yesterday, another drove up and the driver said: "Listen, we keep this door covered specially for you—we're the guys to call."

This morning I called in a bank to open an account. Three assistant managers, described as vice presidents, sit in an enclosure, their names propped on their desks. You wait your turn. At first my man was rather off-hand. "British national, are you?" he said, as though that were somewhat reprehensible. But he warmed up.

I had a cup of coffee in a small shop. A notice pronounced its cakes to be "bursting with soft, creamy goodness"; another referred to their "luscious large lean beef-burgers." An Epsom Downs bookmaker would feel at home.

Newspaper advertisements are revealing. Shipyard workers are advertised for at 44 to 50 dollars a week, with transportation paid; no experience necessary. An "old-established concern" wants boys sixteen to eighteen at 19 dollars for a five-day week. Western Union Telegraphs is appointing housewives in Manhattan, Bronx, and Brooklyn as communications agents—to receive telegrams over the 'phone and deliver them within a few blocks.

*December 27th, 1943.*

I've been spending Christmas Day and Boxing Day in the country—country rather like Hindhead, Surrey—at Westchester, fifty miles out. I stayed with Diarmuid Russell, son of "A.E." the Irish man of letters. I had known him only two days and, indeed, I was invited before we had met at all. When the Christmas presents were opened on Christmas morning (we had put up the tree the night before, a tree cut down in the nearby woods), four gifts had my name on—two from the small children. One was marked, "For Lancashire wool." I was a bit overwhelmed. It's been a very happy two days. The house is built of wood, and stands half a mile from its closest neighbour, with wooded hills round about. We went off in the Ford to fetch the milk each day—such milk, half cream; such lovely

food, the finest grapefruits I've ever had, pink-shaded and sweet; oatmeal porridge with cream, a large roast ham, peaches in brandy, English toasted muffins, plum pudding and whisky sauce. But it's cruel to write about it. We called on neighbours and they came to us—last night to an egg-nog party at a banker's house—a young man who has risen like bubbles in champagne from having but little to being rich, a dark-visaged, handsome powerful fellow. Most folk present were Republicans, conservative-minded and well-to-do, but one was a man who works as a mechanic (though he hunts in peace-time) and came to the party wearing canvas shoes. As a mechanic he works ten hours a day, sets off in the car soon after 6 a.m., earns 50 dollars a week, from which 7 dollars 60 cents are deducted in income tax. (There are further income and other taxes, too.) The work-people, he said, belly-ache over income tax as British workmen do. He does sixty hours a week, which he thinks a trifle too much—and he's right. The house was half surrounded by motor-cars. We'd had a devil of a job getting there at all; sleet fell during the afternoon and, running on to main roads after dirt tracks, we found the surface sheeted in ice. Diarmuid slithered the car down a hill, one wheel in a V-shaped gutter for safety, but twice the gutter ended in a grid with a concrete ridge to surmount. We backed and pushed in the sleetish rain. Diarmuid and Rosie his wife did nobly (the papers to-day report hundreds of accidents). But we weren't through yet; at the house another car hooked up on our bumpers—nothing but genius could have so entangled us. Indoors, we drank egg-nogs and talked. A great bowl held the creamy concoction; a coloured butler brought it in, and the hostess ladled it out. With it went small biscuits covered with home-cured ham. In the next room burnt logs a foot thick and a yard long—a fireplace almost good enough for Chequers. We sat on chairs or on the floor. "Glad to know you, sir," the men say. The women ask: "How do you like America?" and are delighted when you say you do. Americans (I'm assured) badly want to be liked—as children do; and they want you to like their country. The political ideas of these folk are much apart from mine, I daresay—many of them greatly dislike Mr. Roosevelt and the New Deal, and they're very strong on the American tradition of fighting your way up, doubtless thinking lack of success means just stupidity. But meeting them socially is very pleasant. Richness, warmth everywhere. We ourselves were visited by a very English-looking American—clipped moustache, looking like a retired English colonel, unassuming, quiet, twinkling eye. Strangely, he's got



a son serving in our King's Royal Rifles. I'm told that, in truth, this regiment (or a sister of it) was originally formed in America of loyalists to the British Throne who fought against other Americans; and that during this war an English colonel came over and recruited sixty or so young Americans to serve in the British Army. Our visitor's other son, in the U.S. Navy, has been killed in the Pacific—he'd just fired a torpedo which helped to sink a Jap cruiser when he was himself struck. A son has been born posthumously, and the child's mother I met—a tall girl of distinction, looking very young to be a mother, very dark hair and eyes, a little withdrawn within herself, but with a smile that flashed out now and then. How swiftly one runs into the tragedy of war! The war hits more mundanely, too. Mrs. Russell, with two young children, has no domestic help; such help is now almost impossible to get. Servants are earning as much as 150 dollars a month (nearly forty English pounds). And they won't clean shoes! (My hotel doesn't clean them, either.) Butter is short in the countryside—the ration works out at about two ounces a week each, but, happily, gifts are often forthcoming. The gifts over Christmas have been very numerous—bottles of Bourbon or rye or Scotch whisky (the last rare), rum, Benedictine, and a host of other things, till one felt it was a trifle overdone; but one's apt to think that—perhaps wrongly—about everything in this country. Lavishness; everything too big; nothing quite within bounds. Women and children are fussed over more than in England, too.

At one moment in this country you are Mr. So-and-So, formally, and the next you are James. No intermediate stage when you are Hodson. I find this pleasant.

An English woman writer of quality who eats in a drug stores sometimes said she asked Tom, the man behind the counter, if he would do her a favour. "Can't take you out to-night," he said, laughing. "I've got a date." She said No, she didn't mean that. "No," he said, "but I do. I wanna take you out." So off she went with him one night. They liked one another and got along fine. She said to me: "You must meet these drug-store men, and bus-drivers and conductors, and those kinds of people. Something fine, there. I don't think our Embassy people are much good, or do us much good. Too snooty altogether."

Remark to-day: "You look like an American from New England—long and lean." "Yea, he sure does." This was your humble servant.

I talked with Diarmuid about his father, "A.E.," the poet. He had a powerful memory. At twenty-three he could recite any classical poem in the language—you could name any one you liked and he'd speak it. He spent long years after that studying Yogi and learning how to concentrate; he would lie in bed with eyes closed, bringing before his vision a white triangle and holding it there. (I must try this. Diarmuid says that almost at once your mind suggests to you: "Why not make it a circle, or a square?") "A.E." seems to have prepared himself over a period of fifteen years to concentrate in a pure manner for three months. Most of us cannot concentrate at all; I sometimes believe I can think of A only by allowing my attention to wander to B. "A.E." tried an experiment one night. A play of his was being performed at Abbey Theatre, Dublin. "A.E.," behind the stage, concentrated on a vision of water. Next day, a number of those in the audience spoke of having seen water rushing across the stage. Diarmuid holds the view that any one of us, were we properly instructed and trained to use our minds and did we work hard enough at training our minds, could become senior wranglers or mathematicians or whatever we wished. I have no such faith. I think we are born with, or without, a certain amount of brains, gifts, and qualities, and that although what we have can be developed, you can't train what doesn't exist. Diarmuid holds that environment is nearly everything, and heredity almost nothing. So that my argument that distinguished women ought to be encouraged, if unmarried, to have children, and that men of quality like Bernard Shaw ought, were we sensible, to have fathered a good many children (were they willing) makes less appeal to him than to me. It's time we began to ruminate on this aspect of war—husbandless women in all lands, and especially in England and our Dominions. Our finest lads are being killed; many of our finest girls are to be husbandless, and, unless we change our outlook, childless. Once again a generation is to be destroyed and those who live, robbed of part of the happiness they need, deserve and are entitled to. The Church and married women in general and a large part of mankind will denounce any change of outlook; but if the problem is widely discussed, men and women who are strong in mind will be encouraged to do what in their bones they think is right and wise.

To return to "A.E." Diarmuid saw him do another remarkable thing. A book taken from their house by a visitor fifteen years before was returned through the post. His father hadn't seen it during the interval. From memory, he spoke six pages

of it—prose—word for word. Diarmuid checked it as his father spoke. Talking of feats of this sort, he reminded me of a boy in the Middle West who at the age of nine could watch a freight train go by and, having caught the numbers on them, give you the total those numbers made when the last car had rolled on. The lad died two years afterwards. Plenty of evidence that mankind has only partially mastered its powers.

I talked with a kindly American woman about Negro servants. She likes them, and has often taken a Negro Nannie to New York, and had her to lunch with her and travel with her. "I should be very angry if anybody objected," she said. "But Negroes are much like children. They'll ring up their friends and arrange to meet and all the time they're arranging it you know it simply can't be done—either the distance is too far to go in the time, or the place'll be too crowded. In some ways they're awfully stupid, but with children they're quite marvellous. The other drawback is that a lot of them have a smell of their own, and I'm very sensitive to that." (We smell, too. Esquimaux can find us quite objectionable; so can the Chinese.) I asked what the solution is to the Negro problem, but, naturally enough, she didn't pretend to know. In Detroit not long ago, a management proposed making six Negroes foremen over whites. The whites wouldn't have it. Negroes struck work. When the American Declaration of Independence was written with its noble sentence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," the minds of Jefferson and his friends seem to have excluded Negroes automatically, for many Negroes were in those days slaves. But they can't go on being excluded for ever. They're not slaves now, although the South still withholds from them many equalities.

Phrase to me when I commented on the strong whiskies and cocktails given me: "This is a hard-liquor country. You've got to get used to it."

I've been reading a poem by "A.E." called *Promise*. How noble and lovely and encouraging it is!

No wonder two officers in Gallipoli wrote saying that only his poetry had kept them sane or that two Viceroys of India found consolation in his work as they lay dying. This is surely one of the joys of creative work. When a letter comes to me from a reader on the other side of the world, as sometimes it does, my heart is lifted up.

These two past days have been happy. Quietness of the country, which has a spaciousness and dignity; home life; kindliness, simplicity. The world has nothing to offer better than these. We drove past a road notice which said, "Please, Mr. Driver . . ."—the rest was swallowed in the dusk and speed of our passing, but it gives you the idea of a freshness that is in life here; only 170 years since the Declaration of Independence. My friend R. M. stayed for the week-end in a house where an old retainer aged ninety-two has just died—a man whose father was an early white soldier and his mother a dorky. The old chap had been with the family for a generation or more—had grown unable to do much but kept popping up here and there in the house, beaming and benign. They held his burial service in the drawing-room and were deeply grieved at his going.

On frosty days there's electricity in the air, so that if you touch a brass knob a spark may fly or a mild shock be given you. One hears it said a spark may flash when two friends shake hands; but I haven't seen this happen—not yet.

December 28th, 1943.

This small world. Last night Roger Machell and I went to see *Carmen Jones*. Machell was wounded near me in Boulogne in May, 1940. In the hotel vestibule as we set off I ran into a man wearing American war correspondent's uniform, who, when I was with him last, was with me in Arras as a conducting officer—his name, B. L. Jacot, the short-story writer. He, too, was wounded at that time in France.

*Carmen Jones* is Bizet's *Carmen*, with libretto brought up to date and sung by Negroes. Carmen sings, "If you're hard to get I goes for you; if you love me that's the end of you." When a diminutive suitor appears she says, "You're too little and too late"—the phrase we've so often used of our men and supplies in this war. This version of *Carmen* is more sexy, more lively, more vulgar, but also more entertaining, I think, than the normal one. Last week it took over 40,000 dollars. The crowd scenes are magnificent. The Toreador's song has become a heavyweight boxer's song—this man was maybe the weakest among the principals—his voice too light. Carmen herself was superb, and the dancing very fine. Everybody on the stage was bubbling over with life and vitality. The Toreador is actually a New York policeman on leave of absence and making his first stage appear-

ance. Carmen hasn't appeared on the stage before, either—she worked in a camera shop in Philadelphia while studying. Here is *The American Story* once again—this leap to fame and fortune. One begins to understand their passion for unrestricted competition. If you have *What It Takes*, life can be rosy. But the jungle should be controlled, somewhat.

By the way, will this stage success intensify the Negro problem? Easy to understand it going to their heads, toughening their urge to be treated as equals.

Earlier in the day to the Museum of Modern Art. There's a roomful of paintings and drawings done in the Pacific war zone by American Marines. Major Douglas L. Dickson doesn't wrap it up, as folk say in Lancashire. He has a portrait of a soldier "all in" whom he calls "one of the little guys, just plain worn out, a man who's had too many, too close, for too long." This soldier is like an emaciated scarecrow, his clothes hanging on him, his eyes dully wild and protuberant. This is authentic war, and people had better see some of it. An argument has been proceeding in the newspapers on why certain horrific pictures taken at Tarawa should have been suppressed—they showed the Marines' losses, bodies floating in the water, wave after wave of men being slaughtered. Here's one of war's fundamental problems: hide the truth and folk become complacent, because, anyhow, their imaginations are pitifully small. Give the truth, and maybe such a wave of revulsion will ensue as would hold up the war effort; and this war has to be fought. However, the only safe way is for a democracy to treat its people as adults and tell them all the truth you can. Truth will brace and toughen them and give them a feeling of responsibility. At the moment, American correspondents in London complain that American censors are using security as a pretext for eliminating stuff that's got nothing to do with military information; nor are they allowed to say who is in charge of censorship. We British have had to fight this same battle, and in the main we've succeeded fairly well.

My beard appears to grow faster and stronger in this country.

General Eisenhower, chosen to command the Second Front, says he'll have the war in Europe over in 1944; Henry Wallace says it ought to be over within a few months of the Second Front beginning; Cordell Hull is more cautious. If I had to choose a month, I'd select next October—certainly not earlier.

A student of life said to me: In choosing a house, look in the neighbourhood of the rich. Always you'll find a small house that is pleasant and cheap; for what do the rich want with charging high rents? And they always build a number of small houses for one purpose or another, which purpose they forget to fulfil.

Americans smoke cigarettes constantly—even between courses when eating; and they leave "packs" of cigarettes lying handy about their rooms.

I asked a professional man if he played golf. He said, No, he used to play tournament tennis, but when he got past that, he played nothing. "It's this curse of playing to win," he said. "If we can't win, we give it up."

The *New York Times* on Boxing Day had 118 pages. Madness.

New York weather can be as puzzling as London's. Yesterday was warm and delightful—I walked out with my coat over my arm.

A Left-wing editor said to me to-day: "I'm awfully afraid that after the war America will sink back, if not into isolationism, then into an intense nationalism. Roosevelt is apprehensive over whether America will treat his proposals for taking part in world collaboration as America treated Wilson's, but whether *all* of Roosevelt's moves towards the Right can be explained on that ground, I'm not sure. I much doubt if Governor Dewey's abandonment of isolationism is sincere—I suspect it's mere political manoeuvring. There's no enthusiasm for the war in this country." (I interrupted to say that, in a sense, there's none in Britain, but we realise the dirty job has to be done.) Another editor said that when feelings rise in discussions many folk say that England has dragged America into fighting her (England's) war, as usual; but that, in general, people feel: "Well, the Government has gone into war and there it is; we must put up with it; we can't do anything about it."

An intelligent workman said to me that he would confine his views to what is said among his own group of workmen in a war factory forty miles from New York. He said: "They say Churchill and Roosevelt are a couple of stinkers; that Churchill got America into the war and Roosevelt connived at it. When their names are mentioned, men boo or shout derisively. When

you ask, 'Wasn't it the Japs who got us into the war?' they won't think that one out."

*December 30th, 1943.*

I came to Washington yesterday. Very comfortable train journey sitting in an armchair—a real, big armchair which swivels right and left; this, in a Pullman, overheated as is usual. Courteous Negro attendants. One oldish man with the solemn face of a judge handed out our bags and helped us on with our coats. In my car alone his tips must have been worth 4 to 8 dollars. The dining-car was next door—food poor, the same gulf between train food and hotel food as in Britain. Sun had poured in through the windows, creating an air of summer abroad, but streams held broken ice and light snow was in the fields. The countryside is dry and looks burnt up and brown, but the brown has lots of colour in it. I read a good deal. Curious to see how little support Mr. Roosevelt seems to get in home affairs: the *Nation*, a Left-wing journal, found his Christmas broadcast pretty barren, and the *New York Times* yesterday accuses him of having undermined his own administrators by rewarding the big unions instead of penalising them for breaking their no-strike pledges. A shrewd observer tells me: "Nobody approves his Home Front actions; practically everybody approves his Foreign Front work." The *New York Times* asserts that for the five-hour run to Washington the engineers and trainmen are paid for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days, because they get paid on mileage, so many miles representing a day's work.

Trouble is brewing, I suspect, over the Second Front invasion. Senator Wheeler of Montana declares that 73 per cent. of the troops who will invade Europe in the West will be American, that Britain shrank from incurring this heavy cost, and that U.S.A. is yielding to Stalin's demands. Washington, in reply, refuses to say what proportions will be British and what American, adding that, anyhow, Britain has far more of her troops in the Mediterranean than America has, and reminds folk, too, that America has three times Britain's population. I have always personally questioned how deeply America has realised the part she will have to play and the losses she must incur in defeating Germany in the field. She has some eight millions in her armed forces and between three and four millions overseas, yet the visitor sees young men working in hotels and civilian jobs to a degree that no longer exists in England, and the enlisting of fathers—what's called "Dad's draft"—has caused much controversy. As some wit has said,

Britain is conscripting grandmothers when U.S.A. is arguing over conscripting fathers. The same cleavages between one section of the people and another exist as in Britain—some middle-class folk are hard-hit while munitions workers grow prosperous; families are losing sons while others are untouched. Phrase used to me by a Left-wing artist: "Roosevelt couldn't have a revolution, so he made terms with Big-Business to get the war won."

The Left-wing weeklies, *Nation* and *New Republic*, seem less prosperous than their British opposite numbers and probably exercise less authority—which is symptomatic of public opinion here. Nor is the New York stage just now as intellectual as London's.

An English journalist resident here several years spoke to me of the immeasurably complicated scene. "The other side of Chicago, the war is with the Japs; this side, with the Germans. You've to remember that America was started by down-trodden folk from Europe, people suspicious of everybody and who just had to make good. Much of that stays in the people. Food? Food is frugal compared with two years ago." He spoke with admiration of American doctors, one of whom pulled him through an illness; and also of the neighbourliness of Americans. "In any small domestic crisis they rally round in a way that English people at home don't." Other English people confirm this. A woman said: "If you're giving a party, they'll try and lend you their silver or bring in cakes and gifts. I didn't like America at first, or Americans—they still say they can't tell half that my husband says—but now I like Americans better than the English who live here. They're much livelier and warmer-hearted—the English are boring and high-hat by comparison."

I had some lively argument with a second English journalist who's been in U.S.A. six or seven years and who said he was more alarmed at the amount of anti-American feeling among the English than at anti-British feeling among Americans. He said America couldn't be blamed at all for not coming into the war earlier and that, in his view, she would have come in later on even if Pearl Harbour hadn't dragged her in. I replied that he was right to be fair to America, but he must be fair to England, too; that the vocal elements in U.S.A. hadn't hesitated to tell us where our duty lay before the war, that we had been late in getting to grips with Hitler, but that we had finally



done so, whereas America, whose war it was also, had been much longer in seeing where wisdom lay; and that had America been willing to act several years ago as she is acting now, the war would not have occurred; but that, of course, it isn't only America who was slow, but ourselves, Russia and most of Western Europe. It interests me to see how he has absorbed the American point of view. He said that most of the American soldiers in England receive an awful impression of us owing to lack of hospitality, damp, cold weather, poor food and the depressing black-out. But he granted that the Americans go about too much in their own gangs and keep to themselves too much. (But I also hear now and then of Americans writing home in praise of us; for one thing, they expected us to be rattled by the war to a degree we are not.)

Baltimore working-class houses struck me, as I rode by, as being as boxlike as English ones.

The Stars and Stripes are much flown—more than we fly the Union Jack.

At Washington we shared taxis; porters called out our destinations like racecourse bookies shouting the odds. A taxi-starter (title written on his cap) organised it and despatched us when the taxis were full.

Advice: "Open your bedroom window to keep well—most Americans keep them shut." I've tried both ways. The blast can be icy, so that halfway through the night I'm cold and wake up. But the shut window is stifling. In one bedroom the thermostat governing the heat had a trick, once it began to work, of clanging every few minutes; it wakened me regularly at 6.30 a.m. and rang like an alarm at intervals.

A taximan said to me in his mid-European American: "War don't hurt this country much—it's too big." On Roosevelt, he said: "Roosevelt had three turns already—plenty o' people don't like that. Still, if he stands—plenty votes for him."

In my parlour-car to Washington three travellers were shown out—apparently hadn't paid the excess. One was a Catholic priest.

The newspapers carry a small piece saying that in General Clark's Fifth Army at Salerno two of his three divisions on landing were British. This important fact has been withheld

for several months. Why? We in England were kept in the dark also. The bulk thought the Fifth Army was entirely American. Difficult to see how garbling the facts can make for better relations. As war goes on, the Americans will have more of the dirty work to do; it's important, then, that we should have credit for what we've done so far. I'm assured here in quarters which should know that most American newspapers give us a square deal, but they've a natural tendency to play-up American deeds to the exclusion of ours.

The son of a poet tells me his father created his poems in his subconscious. Once he wrote a stanza and could go no further with the poem. But fifteen years later, while lying on a beach, the rest of the poem came to him and he wrote it down as fast as he could put pencil to paper.

A taximan driving an Englishman past the White House said: "Wish we had Churchill in there 'stead o' that olc bastard."

The President likes to be thought a great guy and tends to "put on an act" as such. Smokes cigarettes incessantly. But he's certainly a great man as the world reckons them to-day. Sometimes at his Press Conference he looks awfully tired and ill, deep dark shadows under the eyes and face very grey. But more usually he's full of beans and looks pretty well. Once, at the signing of papers on a great State occasion he walked in assisted by his son and a secretary—it took him three or four minutes to move fifteen yards, three or four minutes during which there was no sound but shuffling and the tap! tap! of his stick. What a triumph of courage this man is! Those of us who ail can take heart from him.

I'm told his weakness is that he can never sack anybody who has been loyal to him; even when it's proved to him the man is inefficient he's kept on—removed, but often promoted; so that Washington has a mightily swollen bureaucracy.

He can be angry. A few days ago a columnist wrote of the "four tired old men running the war." At his next Press Conference Roosevelt spoke of plans being made despite what columnists say, and his eye swept the assembly looking for the offender.

*December 31st, 1943.*

Dined last night with my old friend, Major-General Alec H. Gatchouse, who commanded the 10th Armoured Division in the Battle of El Alamein. Our paths have crossed three times in

this war: first in and about Atras, second in the Western Desert, and now here. He lost 38 lb. weight in the desert and has recovered only 8 lb. Looks well. Drove me out to the Chevy Chase Country Club, where he's living; an eighteen hole golf links just outside; light snow on the links. We served ourselves at supper, for servants are short. He's flown 30,000 miles to and fro across America visiting tank-production plants and talking to American armoured units. He's formed a high opinion of America, of their speed in the uptake in adopting new ideas and of their industrial plants.

Our British tank output doesn't approach the American either in amount or quality. The first point is excusable, but not the second—not in this fifth year of war. Our whole history on tanks sheds no lustre on us. We invented them—and allowed the enemy to pass us by.

Gatehouse had an amusing story on American golf bets—spoke of a game where they had thirty side bets: bets on slices, eagles, birdies, first nine, second nine, the match and Lord knows what. He played at one club where a member wagered he would take seventeen strokes at one hole at least and wouldn't go round under a hundred. The American sounds a madman, but it was a tricky course where it's said that a professional once took fifty-seven shots at a hole crossing a lake. Must have had the devil's own attack of socketing, I think. In cold weather the Americans wear a thick pair of gloves when golfing, taking them off for the moment when they play the shot. Must try it. Often enough our hands are so cold we can't grip the club; and that's ruin.

A British colonel told of an encounter between an English officer carrying his short cane and an American liftman. "Say, what do you carry the cane for?" asked the American. "To keep my hand out of my pocket," was the answer. "Guess you'd better carry two canes; then you'd keep the other hand out of *our* pockets," said the liftman drily. The colonel told also of an officer and himself walking out with two women friends. A Negro pushed between them roughly, muttering something impolite. The other British officer, small but accustomed in his younger days to boxing, hit the Negro in the stomach, doubling him up, and as his head came down, tried one at the jaw, but missed, and struck the Negro's cheekbone, breaking some of the bones in his own hand. The morals of the stories are: (a) that most Americans think we pay for nothing and that our reverse Lend-Lease has made small impression on them—few of them have heard of it; and (b) the Negro question is a tough one. Indeed,

an English professor said to me: "The problem of India is a mild headache for us compared with that of the Negroes for the Americans." I asked: "What's the solution?" He said: "There is none." Later in the day, a Labour leader said: "The solution is to treat them with complete equality. When that's done, the situation grows slowly easier. So long as the South treats them badly, so long will the odd Negro in the North kick over the traces. I've worked myself under a Negro foreman. It was all right with me. He knew far more about the work than I did."

Summing up by British journalist: "The war has been painted in pastel colours so far for the Americans. Small actions have been played up fantastically. The war hasn't come home to them yet."

Americans are constantly testing public opinion. I read to-day that 47 per cent. think Russia will co-operate post-war, that 75 per cent. want economic planning, that 80 per cent. think U.S.A. should take more part in world affairs after this war than she did after the last, that 44 per cent. think war sacrifices in taxes are too light, that 74 per cent. think Roosevelt has run the war well and 56 per cent. think he's done a good job at home.

How all this can be judged with such precision in a nation of 136 millions stretching across thousands of miles of territory, is one of life's manifold mysteries.

I've been learning something of the Middle West. In a letter introducing me to Henry Wallace, the Vice-President, my friend Diarmuid Russell says I seem to be a Middle Westerner. There's some joke there maybe that I don't fathom, for the Middle West is sometimes described as the political Cave of Adullam, the home of the Junkers of America, the abode of secret societies, of esoteric cults, a place with the highest urban murder rate, and, in addition, the great "Bible belt." Anyhow, it's a place where, prior to Pearl Harbour and El Alamein, a propagandist for Britain was likely to have a rough time. Maybe he will still, though I gather the situation *vis-d-vis* England is much improved. American cocksureness is not what it was following their own misfortunes and losses, and Winston and our Eighth Army have helped us. So has our Army collaboration in the field. Winston himself, now that the Presidential Election is influencing nearly everything, is grow-

ing rather less valuable because so many Americans think Winston has Roosevelt in his pocket. Doubtless it suits them to think it. There has been much to overcome—twenty years of misrepresentation or misunderstanding, war debts, Ireland, India, Palestine, our House of Lords and social system, Lend-Lease and the notion that we never pay for anything we get hold of, and so on. It's appalling that we let it drift so far. Many Americans thought us unreliable hypocrites—still do. But we're making progress. I'm told Americans in Britain have helped, too. On the other hand, I am assured that, once in the Middle West, I shall be astonished by much generosity, and even open-mindedness. But certainly I shall be going at an awkward time; we have lost a little ground in the past few months owing to the forthcoming Presidential Election. Any suspicion that we are meddling, or would if we could, in U.S.A. politics would do us infinite harm. Opinion in the Middle West thinks it's three to one against Roosevelt and that either it will be a Republican walk-over or, if Roosevelt stands, the election will be the bitterest in American history. But the Middle West is not famous for sound judgment. Colonel McCormick lives there, the man who wanted us to give up the fight and transfer ourselves bag and baggage to Canada. "Dangerous, vindictive"—these adjectives are used of him in sober journals.

Here are some brief verdicts given me by a student of the American scene:

Americans don't read the papers, only the headlines. The radio is more important than the Press and maybe the films than either. Many folk are illiterate, e.g. 27 per cent. of Georgia is illiterate.

America is a nation of extravagant contrasts.

Henry Wallace is discounted. (When the film, *The World of Plenty*, was shown in Illinois and Wallace's face appeared, women shouted: "Oh, you Communist!" He's not a Communist, but a Liberal.)

The universities hold many who desire 'a soft peace.' A lot of such folk are of German origin. They are anti-Nazi, or claim to be. The nation has many Methodists who are ardent pacifists, too. California was the German Bund H.Q. The leaders were gaoled, but many of the smaller fry are still active.

Frank Capra's excellent films, *Know your Ally Britain*, *Battle of Britain*, *Battle of Russia*, *Prelude to War*, and so on, have not

been shown to the general public. They were made for the U.S. Army. (I'm told in another quarter that our *Desert Victory* was not shown in the really large theatres outside New York—only the smaller ones, and that millions of people have never had the chance to see it. However, three times as many theatres showed it as showed Coward's *In Which We Serve*.)

Henry Luce of *Life* said recently that the only question is: *How* we collaborate, not *whether* we collaborate.

The only national papers are the weeklies like *Life* and *Time*. The dailies seldom go more than, say, 500 miles from New York. Far afield the papers are "locals." A momentous local happening will often displace the war news.

A second such witness:

The greatest fear of the American as individual or nation is of being made "a sucker." That's one reason why they suspect us British so much.

You can buy in some parts of U.S.A. a child's picture book of history in which no reference whatever is made to the English. Education is usually controlled by local bodies, so that if the local feeling is anti-British, the text-books may well reflect it.

Lack of casualties have prevented the war coming home to Americans. (An American woman said to me: "It's a pity New York isn't bombed"—much as the phrase was used by us at home of certain English towns.)

A third such witness:

Americans look on this war much as we looked on the Boer War—no great principle at stake and victory certain; so they want that victory to be achieved as cheaply as possible. If the Second Front results in heavy American casualties, there'll be much growling among the people—they'll say they are giving their blood for Britain and that it is all Britain's fault, but they'll just stop short of wanting to call off the war. As for the voice of America, the Press and the radio—that will be all right.

We've lost a bit of ground recently because America has found she can talk to Russia and doesn't need us as a middle-man taking our commission (as she thinks we should). They think we have Roosevelt in our pockets and that we are deep Machiavellis all wearing Eden's black hat. They think that we put up fools to speak for us, but that others are in the

background who are subtle and clever and unscrupulous. Post-war in England they see the Lords trampling on the people or the people trampling on the Lords—in either case, very un-American!

*Desert Victory* succeeded because it was a good film, and exciting—not because it showed English soldiers fighting well. *Mrs. Miniver* succeeded even better. Of course, *Mrs. Miniver* annoyed you and me because a lot of it was phony. But Americans think England is feudal. *Mrs. Miniver* showed us being feudal, so that was all right. We led them a little way towards truth. That is all you can do—take them a little way. The whole truth they wouldn't stand—they'd say it was lies.

A fourth such witness:

Some awkward problems are ahead—tariffs, civil aviation, post-war reliefs, payment for Lend-Lease, ceding of territories in perpetuity to U.S.A. all over the globe.

Many American business men and agriculturists are becoming so reactionary that they want to go back, not to 1929, but to 1914; they move further and further away from us, leaving bigger gulfs to bridge.

Americans have a fine turn of wit. An American soldier tells a story that the mosquitoes took so much blood out of him that they sent him a postcard of remembrance on Father's Day. He says they were P.38 mosquitoes and always filled up both fuselages when they called on him.

I lunched with Mr. Len de Caux, Editor and publicist for the C.I.O. group of trade unions. They have Communist elements, I gather, and insist on Negroes and whites being treated alike. In their seamen's union both colours sign on, and on one ship which has a Negro captain and officers, whites serve among the crew. He said he has white women friends happily married to Negroes—couples who are devoted to each other, but added that while there are rare instances of whites working under Negro foremen in the North, there are no such instances in the South. I liked him; he served a year in the British artillery in the last war when only eighteen—but saw no active service. I asked if the trade unionists would back the Four Power co-operation after the war. He said they would. About 2½ million trade unionists are in the armed forces, he said, their places taken by older men or by women (America has now called up men to thirty-eight).

A good many American trade unionists see the war as we English see it—a war against slavery and tyranny, but I think it's certain that they don't as unitedly view it in that way as we do. There are trade unions run by Irishmen, and Irishmen have long memories. The Communists are firm for fighting the war, and their influence, he believes, is far beyond their numbers.

The C.I.O. was formed only in 1935 and claims to have some five million members or more. In all U.S.A. has probably twelve to fourteen million trade unionists, including the Railway Brotherhoods, which are not affiliated to either the American Federation of Labour or the C.I.O. But for every American worker in a trade union, there are three or four who are not.

The C.I.O. office is luxuriously appointed; did a swagger hotel have a public relations department, its carpets might be as thick, its office furniture as good. I commented to him on this. He said that the unions believe in taking offices right alongside the big capitalist organisations, and fitting them out equally well. Unions often pay big salaries, too; the leaders of several unions draw, I am informed, 40,000 dollars a year, and at least one draws 45,000 dollars; quite a number 5,000 to 10,000 dollars—these latter more usual.

I asked him about strikes. He said the strikers seldom get a fair show in the newspapers, for most papers, as in England, are capitalist and Right-wing. You'd imagine, he said, from the newspapers, that the workmen are the profiteers in this war, whereas a lot of workmen, what with bad travelling arrangements—using street cars instead of their own motor-cars as in peace—living in new towns or even in shacks near war works where amenities are poor or even wretched, and having little on which to spend their money when they've earned it, are having a hard time.

We talked on various subjects. He said that everywhere I shall be asked about India: How is it that after 150 years India is largely illiterate, while the Soviet Union in fifteen years has educated its people? And so on. But he readily conceded that U.S.A. has no right to be self-righteous and that in Nicaragua or the Philippines or wherever America has colonised she has no better a record than we have.

Roosevelt was mentioned. The unions have no other such friend, I think, likely to be President. It's not easy to see them voting for anybody else, should Roosevelt stand again, though John L. Lewis's men may be exceptions.

I asked if he thought America will endure her casualties with-



out wanting a premature peace. He said, Yes, she will; losses would bring the war home to her, toughen her, make her more bitter against Germany and more war-minded.

Later, I called on another leading trade unionist, Irish, talkative, an official of the American Federation of Labour. One of his sayings: "I'm not a swivel-chair artist." On his desk hangs a notice: "You still here? Another half-hour shot to hell."

He declared that in one strike he was involved in, the employers placed dynamite under his bed; at that time (1936) they used strike-breakers—X. Y., for instance, who was linked with the Queen of the Prostitutes of New York, somebody else who ran a dope racket—he reeled off half a dozen of them. He recommended me to read the report of an investigation into the employment of spies in American industry. It was clear that some U.S.A. employers in the past have not commanded his admiration; nor do certain of them to-day. He feels they use, or try to use, the war to break or infringe men's rights, cut wages, and transfer men to weaken the unions. America is not, he said, welded together by her war effort as Britain is. I told him in passing that in Britain our A.B.C.A. is liberalising our soldiers' minds. He said in America they have a situation the very opposite, for some American soldiers overseas are beginning to ask whether their enemy is Adolf Hitler or John L. Lewis. I asked him, on that, whether he regards Lewis as against the war. He said, No, Lewis is a 100 per cent. for it, but not to the extent of flag-wagging all the time.

He quoted some figures showing that America's war production is such that in certain substances or articles she is producing in a month that which formerly took a year. She is already closing down a number of hearth furnaces and open furnaces, switching over to making washing-machines instead of certain weapons—in short, turning again to consumer goods. This trade union leader thinks that in the next six months between a million and two million people will switch from "swords to ploughshares." America is now producing 70 per cent. more goods and materials than in 1940, so that when the war ends, say, in 1946, she will either have to increase her former peace-time production by 70 per cent. or twenty million work-people will be out of employment. Three millions will leave the aeroplane factories and shipbuilding yards alone. The union leaders hope the pattern evolved during the next months regarding the switch-over will be valuable for what must follow later. I said that if U.S.A. increases her peace-time output by 70 per cent.

either her standard of living will sky-rocket or her exports will grow colossal. He said that our four workmen touring America had asked him what America will do with all the merchant ships she is building?

One answer to that I heard in another quarter was that the American Navy will want to take a host of them over as a standby against another war. But supposing there's no war? (And what war, anyhow?) Are those ships to lie up year after year, rusting and rotting? Surely, if the world is to be fed, they'll be needed. We British may want a lot of them.

We talked for a moment about Roosevelt. He believes that, if he stands, the President will be re-elected, despite all his blunders on the Home Front. Roosevelt, in his view, gives jobs to people who are unpractical. "I *know*," he said. "I have to deal with 'em."

I gathered that he had much admiration for what Britain has done in this war and for our trade union movement. I said that, moving about America, I feel in a whirl, with one foot off the ground.

This impression of a somewhat unstable world was not lessened by what he said about a visit to Canada in which, he asserted, his telephone line was tapped and he couldn't get his numbers until the local "Gestapo" had rigged up their listening instrument. But how accurate this is, I don't know.

He was frank about the A.F.L. refusing to meet Russian trade unionists in conference during the war, for, in the A.F.L.'s view, the Russians will be no more than mouthpieces of the Russian Government and in no sense independent trade unionists. But, he said, the ultimate Peace Conference is different—they'll be willing to get round a table *then*. (The C.I.O. in contrast is willing to confer with the Russians now.)

My Washington hotel, half private, provides no more than a room. I walk out to a coffee-shop for breakfast—sit in a pew, eat maybe bacon on griddle cakes. A placard boasts of chicken in the basket, and this to-night I dined on, followed by apple pie and ice-cream. Both too sweet. Much of the food has a schoolboyish quality—and much of American life has an adolescent touch. Children, so far as I've observed them, tend to be precocious and over-indulged. No wonder Americans are learning war the hard way. American women and girls are finely turned out; even secretaries and shopgirls walk abroad in fur coats that only wealthy women in England can

afford. Their legs are excellently shaped—better than our women's—but their looks are no better and their voices sound to my ears far worse. The American language, with its grunts and ejaculations, ill becomes a woman's tongue. It continues to be a disappointment to me to hear the words that issue from such well-cared-for faces. Secretarial efficiency is first-class, and there's a fine ring of equality between secretaries and bosses.

*January 1st, 1944.*

For an hour I discussed post-war education with Dr. Grayson Kefauver of Stanford University, who is Chairman of the International Education Assembly, a group of educationists who represented twenty-six nations when they met at Harper's Ferry a month or two ago to talk about the re-education of Axis countries, the rebuilding of education in the war-devastated countries of the Allies, and education for world citizenship. Kefauver is about forty, thick-set, a keen brain, liberal-minded; looks Germanic or Scandinavian. For world citizenship, the International Education Assembly suggested choosing an international language and encouraging the teaching of it to foster world understanding. I asked him which language they had in mind. He said there are good arguments for English, since so many already use it, but an argument on the other side was that it would be unwise to use the tongue of such a mighty *bloc* of people, and that French, the language of a smaller group, might be better received. He himself favours the establishment in America of bi-lingual students who, from the age of, say, twelve, would use two languages in their studies and intercourse. But that second language might, with some students, be Russian, with others Chinese, with others Spanish and so on, according to which parts of U.S.A. they lived and worked in. He is keen on studies in the use of words and language; five years ago he and others began to devote more attention to this. We ought, he thinks, to use words with more care, more exactitude, so that our meanings and intentions are more precisely conveyed. Another new move at his University of Stanford is towards getting graduates to move from one university to another in finishing their studies. He himself attended about four universities as an undergraduate and four more as a graduate. That was largely accidental, but he and his colleagues think that moving from one home of learning to another to find the best teacher of a particular subject is admirable. They've had students who've attended Australian universities, then Stanford (California) and next London.

The International Educational Assembly are to have another meeting in the spring to discuss the sort of education democratic countries ought to have. We talked for a moment about the re-education of the Axis countries, Germany and Japan. He thinks Japan may prove the tougher task. So do I. His Assembly assume that for a time Germany and Japan will be occupied by the United Nations, that Axis propaganda and psychological warfare will be terminated, together with youth organisations controlled by Nazis, Fascists or Japanese military bodies, and that we shall, by means of radio, Press and films, prepared in advance, proceed to inform the people of recent events and of our plans for peace and world security. They look to our forming in those countries new youth organisations committed to the democratic way of life, to introducing new teaching materials into the schools, and to focusing education towards new national and international goals—in short, towards the ideas and ways of life we approve. But they think that in the main the re-education of these nations must be done by the nations themselves. I said that in that view they appeared to be in line with an assembly in London which met under Gilbert Murray. Kefauver said, however, that there's this difference, that the London assembly favoured appointing a High Commissioner for education in the Axis countries and his, Kefauver's Assembly, did not. How should I favour, he asked, an Englishman being that High Commissioner? He certainly wouldn't like to see an American tackling it. He favoured a United Nations committee with as little emphasis as possible on its chairman. He hoped that in the early days of Allied occupation of those countries the educational changes would be operated by the military to avoid odium becoming attached to the educationists; a defeated nation wouldn't complain too much of what the military did. I said that no matter when we withdrew from those Axis countries we should need to keep a watchful eye on what happened afterwards, for I, personally, had never subscribed to the notion that what happens in another nation is no concern of ours, and that if we saw them advancing once more down the wrong road we should have to act, whether that advance was in training of the mind or in making weapons of war. I understood him to agree, and that he would favour drawing the attention of the offending government at once to anything wrongful happening in their schools, and that if that action did not secure a cessation, then the political international organisation should be informed, in order that it might act.

It is not surprising that a London Assembly should favour

a firmer control than do thinkers here; we (like the French in the last war) have suffered more and have been nearer the precipice.

I turned to a different question, asked him how education in America was solving the Negro problem. He said that in a sense it was educating the Negroes that had created the problem; and the war, with our war aims of ending racial distinctions and fighting for liberty and tolerance, had intensified it. I said that on paper and academically there's no case against full equality, and that the whites haven't a leg to stand on. He agreed that there is no moral argument whatever against equality, but, all the same, he didn't quite see where the complete solution was coming from. He said that some of his best students, some of the ablest and cleverest, have been Negroes. But he wouldn't say that if you took a group of white boys of a given age and a similar group of black boys, the black boys would be always equal in mental capacity. He has taught in schools and colleges where both black and white receive the same scholastic training, but there remain social distinctions—at dances the black boys dance with black girls; if a black boy asked a white girl to dance, he would probably be turned down. White people didn't mind having their food cooked and served by blacks, he said, and the white mistress would spend a lot of time in the kitchen with her black cook, but meeting on an equality was another thing. Similarly, they worked together in hotels, but the whites did one sort of job and the blacks another, and even when they did the same sorts of job, the whites often got more pay. In the South there was a kind of frontier; below it the blacks were discriminated against; above it, not, or not to the same extent. Thus, a discontented black in the South could move North, cross the frontier. The demands of war industries had led to that happening infinitely more than usual—crowds of blacks had moved into new towns unaccustomed to receiving them and not knowing how to deal with them, and those blacks are drawing higher pay than ever before. So the war had not only raised the moral issue by putting on record that we are fighting against racial discrimination, but the practical problems have been intensified at the same time.

*January 2nd, 1944.*

Extract from the official pamphlet on Washington's Memorial:  
"Thirteen small colonies with potentially rich but yet undeveloped resources had embarked on armed conflict with the richest and most powerful empire in the world whose fleets

proudly boasted that they ruled the sea and whose far-flung commerce supplied an abundance of the weapons of war." This is our noble selves.

I picked up a taxi last night to visit an English friend married to an American. In the car already was a young man just arrived from San Francisco. He said: "They tol' me there'd be no liquor here, so I brought a case o' whisky, and I've still got seven bottles left." We now picked up a man and his wife bound for a restaurant. She promptly told us she was in North Carolina a few days back. We swerved to the kerb and stopped. "Where you going, mister?" inquired a young officer, and, learning, three of them piled in—all from Texas, they said. Was I going to Texas any time? Really? That was swell. Texas was as big as Germany and France together, they said. It wouldn't be below 45 or more than 85 degrees when I was there. Sure. One had been in England—London and Ipswich. How did I like America? Swell? Did I? That was fine. They were all engineers; one, a demolition expert, didn't think explosives hurt any more (his pals said). Gee, they hoped I'd enjoy my trip. They'd opened the talk by asking: "How are you to-day, sir?" They were most engaging.

There's a saying about Texas: "If America goes to war, I guess Texas will go too"—as though Texas was a different country altogether.

My young English friend said: "You'll find the Middle West will look on you quite objectively as a foreigner, and there's something very nice and clean and good about that."

She thought the carrying of swagger canes by our officers does us a lot of harm. Americans hate it. (So do I.)

Her husband said to her one day: "When are you going to become naturalised? You don't *want* to be American, do you?" She said Yes, she did. She'd become American right away. But would he be willing to become British? "Oh," he said, "but *I'm an American!*" Talking of criticism, she said that I should find Americans without a grain of liberalism in them asking me challengingly: "What about India?"

Points that strike:

The way women drink. They often drink whisky for whisky with the men. The way parties go on very late but don't prevent Americans from getting up next morning. Does the electricity in the air help? You can shuffle your feet across the carpet and

touch somebody's ear and administer a slight shock. There's a saying, "You can fry an egg on the doorknob," because touching a brass doorknob will sometimes elicit a spark.

A young woman said to me: "Will you write another *Red Night* after this war? You should, you know. Somebody ought to do it." (This was a war play wherein I tried to put war on record as the monstrous thing it is.) She has a baby. Does she feel the shadow of future wars already falling on the child? Earlier she had said: "I'm going to be a one-child mother." I argued with her over that, saying she ought to have three. In her outlook one perceives America's deep pacifism.

My Englishwoman friend said: "My coloured maid gets letters from her brother in England saying how much he likes it—the Negroes over there like the British attitude towards them. It's doing us good."

A New York art critic asked if I had noticed in the Museum of Modern Art how one or two artists had used white as the symbol of evil and black as the symbol for good? "You find it in *Moby Dick*, too. The white whale is the evil thing—though I imagine in *Moby Dick* it was done accidentally." Was the subconscious involved in the Negro problem, I wonder?

I see Mayor La Guardia of New York says (knowing he's treading on dangerous ground): "The present system won't work, the economic system. There'll be so many changes, it won't be very much like we have now." This was a talk with the *Herald-Tribune* (and other papers). I like the way the paper attempts to quote him exactly, for he was obviously speaking straight-off, fumbling as he went. He went on: "We'll have to face it prepared, orderly, constructively. If we don't get it, then before it ends it will be confused, disorderly, the result of a complete breakdown. I guess I've said enough."

*Time* prints a piece of verse attributed to Lieut.-General A. E. Nye when sending to General Montgomery waterproofed pants and jacket carried to him by the Bishop of Southwark: a

*So wherever you go  
From Pescara to Po,  
Through mud and morasses and ditches,  
You undoubtedly ought  
To be braced by the thought*

*That the Church has laid hands on your breeches.  
According to Moss,  
The Outfitting Bros.,  
'Twon't matter, so stout is their fibre,  
If you happen to trip  
And go arse over tip,  
Like Horatius into the Tiber.*

If you walk past the State Building in Washington towards the Potomac River you come upon the finest memorials to great men that I have yet seen. I am not devoted either to statues or memorials, but these of Lincoln, and of Washington and of Jefferson, are noble. Here are square miles of open space, the grass now burnt brown by winter, the broad river and the patches of water coated by grey ice. The day, too, was grey and the air colder than at first it seemed. Lincoln, within his stone house, is carved in proportions that dwarf living man, yet the face has a kind of life, the eye a fanaticism, the mouth firmness yet melancholy, the figure strength yet a sort of gentleness and sorrow, too. He has seen the tragic folly of man, but has had the vision also to see what man can rise to. On either side the lofty walls are cut with the words he spoke. On the left is the Gettysburg speech that he pencilled on one sheet of paper. Was there aught of mock modesty in the line, "The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here"? Who can say? If there were, he can be forgiven, for it is counterpoint to what comes after: "but it can never forget what they did here." On the opposite wall is a long piece that he spoke while the Civil War was still being fought. Man in his official utterances has long held it traditional to attribute all to God (as both Hitler and Churchill do to-day), and here Lincoln, after his longings for peace, says, "Yet if God wills that it [the war] continues until all the wealth piled up by the bondman's 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said 3,000 years ago, yet still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.' " Must it? This is the vengeful God, making the innocent pay for the guilty. Lincoln sees the war as the woe due to those by whom the offence of slavery came. That is doubtless what it was, but to attribute it to God, the all-loving God, as doubtless Lincoln thought him, is a mystery beyond me.

Up the steps climbing high to the memorial went this morning soldiers and sailors to look on that face and read those words.



To-day it was as though his figure were carved in two sorts of stone, for the waist upwards to the head shone with a touch of mellow golden colour.

Near the State building are two other statues, one to General Lafayette, the other to Baron von Steuben, who left Frederick the Great's service to become a major-general in Washington's forces and help achieve America's independence. Two bits of history in stone that help us to understand why not all Americans love England.

*January 3rd, 1944.*

I lunched to-day with a Negro professor of Howard University, an all-black university in Washington which has several thousand students in its schools of music, religion, law, medicine, engineering and architecture and the liberal arts. Had a student no scholarship aids, it would cost him some two hundred English pounds a year to study and live there (though I'm well aware you cannot really turn dollars into pounds in this facile way). We lunched at the main dining-room of the railway station. This was a mild day with pouring rain, and the professor turned up carrying his wife's small umbrella with fancy cover. Indeed, a lot of umbrellas resembling parasols are in the streets. I liked him a good deal—seemed to me frank, of liberal mind, and with beautiful manners. Afterwards we went out by street car to the University; nothing impressive about the buildings outside, but the library and browsing room (admirably plain and direct, some of these American descriptions) were spacious, neat and modern in their polished wooden tables and chairs light oak in colour. The members of the staff I met had the same courtesy and quietness. I may be wrong, but I seem to notice among Negroes a hypersensitiveness now and then, an apprehension of criticism or injustice that might rear its head at any moment. Difficult, no doubt, for it to be otherwise when, even at the best, they are seldom accepted as complete equals of the whites. During lunch, my professor said: "It would be possible to prove to you almost anything. Here we lunch without any problem arising, but I could have taken you to a place where our arrival together would have created a scene." He himself is not very dark-skinned—no darker than many a Portuguese, so that he has less difficulty than some of his brethren. I asked if he knows why the South holds to its discriminations more than the North. He said, first, the history of slavery and, second, numbers. "Were there six Negroes in this dining-room when I arrive, I should go away,

for I should know that if too many of us came, difficulties would arise." I said that, while I try to be tolerant, I cannot say I should be agreeable to my daughter marrying a Negro—even apart from the immediate battles the couple would have to fight—that my mind is too rigid to embrace that prospect with equanimity. He said that, on their part, Negroes like himself do not approve mixed marriages; in some Southern States they are prohibited, although illicit unions are accepted. (There's no doubt that some whites and blacks are sexually attracted to one another. He spoke of the time when it was fashionable for white men in New York to have mistresses in Harlem.) Unhappily, one may point out that the incidence of syphilis among black people is high, much higher than among whites, and this is a contributory cause, at all events, of white hostility and refusal, for example, to use the same lavatories. Tuberculosis is high among the blacks, too.

I asked what the practical next steps are that the blacks think should be taken in trying to solve the racial problem. Perhaps he found this a difficult question—at all events, I am still not clear what he thinks the next steps are, but he did say that their best hopes lie in the Labour movement. I gather President Roosevelt is as enlightened on this subject as on others, but he has to rely on the votes of the Democrats of the South, and the South is the greater stumbling-block. In my professor's view, the blacks leaving the South are not always of the best type—they are sometimes noisy or troublesome and don't help the North to look kindly on them. He said: "I sometimes feel rather ashamed of the behaviour of blacks on street cars—they can be very loud-spoken and rowdy." I asked him if he believes the most liberal minds among American whites would welcome complete equality. He said quietly that he did not think so. He spoke of visiting President Roosevelt with a deputation in 1940 which asked him to call up the coloured officers on the reserve. The President announced to them that Colonel Davis was being promoted Brigadier, the first black brigadier, and said how excellent that was. (Howard University has a senior infantry unit of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and all male students must enrol.)

The University dates back to 1867, its founder Major-General Oliver O. Howard, a white officer in the Civil War. His portrait, a bearded man wearing his uniform and medals, is hung above the staircase. The library has some 16,000 volumes dealing with the history of Negroes and their problems. About 2,000 further volumes are published every year.

I do not pretend to know the solution to this problem, but that it can be safely reached short of equality, I doubt. As one of America's foremost men said to me: "It will need wisdom on the side of the blacks and charity on our side."

Last night I slipped into a news theatre—saw Roosevelt on the screen delivering his New Year message. He was received in silence. Winston came on just afterwards and got one or two claps—no more. Roosevelt said that the end is not in sight—he thinks he sees signs of the beginning of partisan politics again, but hopes he's wrong. He spoke, I thought, rather as a father whose children disappoint him a little. It must be a wearing job, this battling against most of the newspapers and the bulk of Congress and Senate. Seldom in history can a leader of a country have had so many opponents.

A picture was shown attacking those Americans, and especially American women, who take little part in the war effort. "Mrs. Exception," this woman was called. The picture began with a soldier just after battle writing home; he's surrounded by his worn-out comrades. He writes: "There aren't any exceptions here, Mum—there hasn't got to be any anywhere, or these bombed houses will be *our* bombed houses, these ruins *our* ruins." There was a flutter of claps when it finished, but most folk took it, as they took Roosevelt, in silence. In this news theatre I was surprised to find that no smoking is allowed. I was pounced on like a shot when I went in with a cigarette. In the parlour cars on the trains no smoking, either. Quite a good idea. We all smoke too much.

A British colonel who has been lecturing in Ohio tells me that one chairman introduced him as from "our Mother Country and our Ally." This colonel wears a monocle.

I had a talk this morning with one of America's statesmen, a man much after my own heart. It is from the United States that, from time to time, there issues a fine statement on mankind's struggle for freedom and independence of spirit, and this man, in my view, is in line with America's tradition. He said, for instance, that full employment after the war is the great problem that has to be solved; the world's problems, indeed, can only be solved by raising the standard of living—a view that is a long way removed from old-time notions. He thought that about three-fourths of the world's farmers are impoverished and underfed and maybe not making twenty pounds a year. That was true of the small farmers of India, China, some of the Balkans and, indeed, some in the Southern States of America.

How long would it take to raise their living standard to what one would like to see (he mentioned maybe ten generations, but I said I hoped much less than that)—and when that was done would they be any different from anybody else? Again, if you took, say, a hundred poor boys of this country and gave them all the same food and opportunities of an equal number of rich boys, would there be anything to choose between them? He doubted it. I asked whether it's true of U.S.A. as it is of us in Britain, that my sort of people are having an average of one child and not reproducing themselves. He said, Yes, that was about it. America's population curve, he said, was about fifteen years behind ours and Argentine's ten years behind America's. I said that we in England would probably institute children's allowances in an effort to redress the population trend, and he commented that he didn't think U.S.A. would act in the matter till the problem hit her in the eye—presumably fifteen years hence.

I asked him whether he thinks America will be grievously upset if her casualties on the invading Second Front are heavy. He was solemn for a moment or two. Yes, he said, she would be upset, for she was a very humanitarian country and she has had little bloodshed since the Civil War. But he was certain she would stick it. I have talked of this problem with several men. Another leader of American thought said that American Army divisions in Italy feel that after a battle they ought to be brought home and their place taken by some fresh division. That seemed, he said, to be different from our Eighth Army, which everybody said was Cromwellian. I suggested he shouldn't be discouraged by American soldiers wanting to come home; that, in my view, all soldiers always want to come home; that in my platoon in France in 1916 most men would have given an eye or a leg to come home and that many men I met in the Eighth Army in the Western Desert also wanted to go home. But those facts didn't prevent our winning the last war nor the Eighth Army's triumph in this. Men do what they have to do, stick out what they have to stick out, and I don't suppose there's much real difference at bottom between Americans and English. With these two men, I spoke about our British-American relationships. The first said he wasn't worried about it; the second said that whatever differences there might be, at all events America's relationship with Britain was better than her relationship with anybody else. He mentioned ironically that after a couple or more million Americans had been in France in the last war, the relationship between France and America

was worsened. (This is not, perhaps, surprising. Being allies is like being married to somebody—you discover the imperfections.)

Returning to my first informant, we spoke of Russia. He had, he said, been troubled over U.S.A.-Russian relations, but thought an improvement had occurred. I said that, ironically enough, he and I and the rest of us had been saved by Russia and by her political system, of which neither he nor I would approve. He asked, by the way, if I had heard that American soldiers in England are being discouraged from seeing too much of our British soldiers lest they should hear too much praise of Mr. Roosevelt? I said, No, that was a new suggestion to me. His own son is in England and speaks well of individual Englishmen he meets; makes no criticisms, but no generalisations, either. I spoke of Britain as being rather poor and impoverished after the war, said that we have a good deal of coal and a good deal of character (he put in quietly: "You've proved that") and a good deal of skill in our people—not much besides. He said that maybe a lot of our people will have to go abroad to help and lead other nations industrially, putting up new factories and so on. I said: "Leavening the unleavened bread." He smiled, and said Winston had once remarked to him: "If you mix your palette, I can prove to you that all you get is a dirty brown." I said: "Winston ought to know; he's a bit of a painter." We were in agreement in wondering whether, or how far, Britain will be able to continue to bring goods from the ends of the earth to Britain, work on them, and return them after fabrication; war makes people learn to do and fend for themselves. He spoke of the great air lines and airports to be built all over the world post-war—thought they would do a lot towards helping employment both in America and Britain; he saw post-war tourist traffic as a big thing—Americans spending perhaps two billion dollars a year in that way. One other point: he thought, with me, that it would help good relations between our two armies fighting alongside one another in Europe if American soldiers were paid as ours and the surplus banked. But I confess the more I ponder it the harder this problem becomes. If American soldiers are not keen to go to Europe, how much less keen will they be if their pay is cut whilst serving there?

*January 4th, 1944.*

The second leader of American thought spoke to me of the problems that will arise when the war in Europe ends, or before

that war ends. For the war against Japan, U.S.A. will require all her Air Force and Navy, but not all her Army. Perhaps two million men could be sent home. But what will Mrs. Jones say if Mrs. Brown's boy down the street comes home and hers does not? Similarly, what would General Motors say if Chryslers were able to turn back to making motor-cars before General Motors? Nobody knows the answers yet. Some of America's best brains are wrestling with the problem. Already some small arms factories have been closed down near New York. At the same time, they needed men in aircraft factories on the Pacific coast. But would it have been wise to send those men 3,000 miles? And who would bring them back? Such are the teasers.

He thought the duration of war in Europe depends on the Russian advance—on that more than on our bombing. On casualties, he said that those America has suffered as yet in this war are not more than half those she suffered in France alone in the last war. He gave me some facts on Japanese atrocities, and I asked if news of them has yet been published in America. He said, No, atrocity stories had been banned so far. He thought the banning unwise; thought America needs those stories. (One cannot help wondering if they are all true. In the last war a story became current that the Germans were boiling their dead to obtain fat, but it was afterwards quite discredited.) He said that as the war becomes grimmer for the Japs, their behaviour tends to improve in the shape of being less brutal (this seems true of the Germans, too, in the war at sea).

Once or twice he referred to Congress as holding men who were a thorn in the flesh. "Those fellas over there," he'd say. Making a patriotic appeal to 531 of them would succeed with 500—who didn't need it—but the thirty-one would take no notice. He didn't know if any of them were guilty of treason—they hid things up very well—but I don't think he ruled it out. Speaking of the censorship and prevention of speculation about the date of the Second Front, he said the British have taken a firm line, for their censorship has teeth in it. America's censorship has no teeth. If a newspaper offends, a letter of protest can be written—not much more. Some Members of Congress were constantly offending, too.

By the way, it is now taken for granted that it was General Marshall, U.S. Chief of Staff, who, anonymously, a few days ago, condemned American strikes as having, by their encouragement of the enemy and holding up supplies, lengthened the war in Europe by several months. This statement I personally thought unsound, as going beyond the facts. All strikes are

abominable, but this rail and steel strike hadn't really begun; of millions of words put out by Goebbels, only a fraction of 1 per cent. dealt with the strikes. Marshall's prestige has suffered a little. America is a turbulent country, where denunciations are pretty commonly made, and one feels they'd get along better if they were more restrained. But that's merely an English view. The passion for front-page news continues, too.

America is just beginning to start something akin to our A.B.C.A. to educate the Army in world affairs. Among items that have pointed the need for it, a senior American officer not long ago lectured junior ones, saying that, once a country has delivered an ultimatum, the receivers of the ultimatum are within their rights whatever they do, and therefore Japan was quite right in attacking at Pearl Harbour. That didn't go down very well; so he added that, as one gentleman to other gentlemen, they must accept his word.

Returning to my informant, he said he thinks isolationism of the old-fashioned sort is dead. The danger now is of a new imperialism. "The danger is not now of staying within our own borders, but of staying within other people's borders." The only possible aggressors, he said, after this war will be the U.S.A., the British Commonwealth and Russia; nobody else would have the weapons, etc.—Germany and Japan would be incapable of aggression for a long time. I said that we three have got to stick together or in due course we shall all be sunk. He agreed.

Speaking for a moment of coal-mining, he said the American miners had certainly been drawing less money than some other workers. Mining was a somewhat decaying industry where men are old and have gone a bit sour.

I asked if he thought the complaint that America will send 73 per cent. of troops to the Second Front (there's nothing official in this figure) will rear its head again. He thinks it will though there's a good answer to it. I said it was very desirable we should have credit for what Britain has done so far, since the U.S.A. must inevitably bear much future brunt. He agreed.

Snow is on the ground, but I see young women with bare legs.

Calvin Coolidge was notorious for his taciturnity. Sitting next him at dinner on one occasion was a fluttering young thing who told him she had made a bet that he would speak at least three words during the meal. Courses came and went. She chattered

away through the soup, *entrée* and sweet, glancing to him invitingly. But he vouchsafed nothing—nothing until, as they rose, he said: "You lose." That was all.

I took a senior officer to lunch at the Mayflower. The dining-room was hung with so many flags you'd have thought the President was going to speak at any moment. Cost me 6 dollars 26 cents—about 32s. 6d. in English. But the Savoy, London, would have cost as much. We talked of who could succeed Winston; he thought some man or other in the armed services could do the job. This notion that somebody who has acquitted himself well in war could therefore do the Prime Minister's job has its dangers; thereby might develop a kind of Fascism. These gallant gentlemen command my admiration, but that admiration must be tempered. D.S.Os. and even V.Cs. do not of necessity mark their holders as men of genius.

*January 5th, 1944.*

My taxi-driver in Washington said: "Tell 'em you been in the greatest country in the world. No other country has got the resources we got. 'Course we're wasteful. Ford made 1,300,000 cars in one year—one year. Then they bring out some little difference makes us all get a new one or fresh tyres or somep'n." He paused. "My son's going to fly a four-engine bomber over there. Guess they don't get much chance." Pause. "Plenty o' trouble ahead of us—these niggers, they marry, get more white. Some niggers only quarter black. Don't like it."

Small notice hung in the train. "Dining car in opposite direction." How often have you or I walked miles in English trains going the wrong way?

Senior officer's remark to me: "If anybody at Staff College had answered problems the way generals answer 'em in war he'd have been ploughed. MacArthur and Company are finding out the right way by chance. If Russia comes in, I give Japan six months. We must avoid the jungles—the Japs are better than us in jungles."

To-night in New York we had another cocktail party. Very enjoyable. Newspaper men keep a high level of fellowship. I mentioned the Cairo censor who said he never passed anything unless he'd already seen it in print. Also the Deep Desert patrol from whom a message was received: "Rommel captured."



Immense excitement. A party went out to meet them, descried only a forlorn man dragging a camel. Asked about Rommel, he said: "Hell, the message was 'Camel ruptured.'"

Some of New York's morning papers come out at 8.15 in the evening, and *P.M.*, the evening journal, makes a first appearance at 3 a.m. This is akin to sending off the 5 p.m. post at half-past three. At midnight an evening paper film critic went off to write his piece; works in the office, often alone, till 4 or 5 a.m. He said he hoped we'd keep our English quality in films and not run after Hollywood's methods; added he has to hunt hard to find some English films—the trade hides them away; sometimes he campaigns to get one shown. But he thought it was bad judgment, nothing more, that placed good British pictures in small theatres. Spoke of the ballyhoo that makes pictures like *For Whom the Bell Tolls* or *North Star* earn all the millions of dollars they do. Hollywood says: "This film has to make eleven million dollars," and it does. Sometimes a powerful company keeps a picture running week after week at a loss so that they can say to the provinces: "This is the picture that ran so many weeks in New York."

Snow and slush in the streets, but this critic wore neither hat nor overcoat. He and a colleague once tried seeing how far into the winter they could go without a coat; went right through.

*January 6th, 1944.*

This afternoon I slipped into the offices of *Time* and *Fortune*; admirable series of cell-like rooms where a writer works alone or with one colleague. One or two London newspapers years ago borrowed a Yankee notion of shoving all the editorial staff in one enormous room, a plan that always seemed lunacy to me. I found a couple of writers worried about the state of mind in which America's soldiers will come home, about the gulf forming between them and civilians. The American Legion after the last war was very Right-wing. Two writers who had been investigating the U.S. Army scheme for giving the troops more news find it disappointing. Discussions are voluntary, whereas in A.B.C.A. they are compulsory. The men are not encouraged to think politically because so many folk in U.S.A. are scared about the forthcoming elections. I said that A.B.C.A. probably functions in 60 per cent. of our Army at home. They said: "Sixty per cent.? Ours is more like two per cent." One had another phrase: "Things wrong in this country come from having too much, not too little."

An English observer said: "Remember, America hasn't got a National Government. So that when a Republican editor gets some stuff from the Office of War Information he says: 'Throw the darned stuff away; that's Roosevelt propaganda.' In this situation we British are neutral. Moreover, we have no machine here, no newspapers, no radio—we're dependent on the Americans for getting our stuff over to their people."

Talking of the re-education of Germany, an English professor said to me: "I think we ought to close the German schools for a time—act as the Germans have acted in Poland in that matter, confine education for a while to adult education." Sounds a strange notion.

I've been reading a magazine turned out at one of the flying fields in Arizona where the R.A.F. and Americans work together. The pictures are violent in colour. A cricket-match was held at night—the first staged under lights. Some definitions are printed:

Streamlined body—one offering minimum of resistance.

D F W T—darned funny way of talking.

Endurance—week without a pint.

Zone of silence—brief silence after embarrassing situation.

Pay load—fortnightly souse.

T M P F F—trim maiden produces funny feeling.

The R.A.F. lads are learning to say "Gas up your ship," to be "shaken rigid," and the Yanks are learning what a "bind" is and a "sprog."

Dined with a distinguished Englishman who has lived here for many years. He emphasised American ignorance of Britain; thus—a year ago a Gallup poll showed that 50 per cent. of Americans thought Eire was fighting with us. Of 200 students under him when he was a university lecturer, only one had heard of the Statute of Westminster. A woman graduate once asked him after he had been talking of the House of Commons: "But hasn't a Member of Parliament to do what the King tells him?" He feels, and he may well be right, that our propaganda here has not been forthright enough—thinks we ought to take a page in the *New York Times* and set out our casualties, and say: "This is issued by the British Government." I asked him what percentage of Americans know what this war is really about and have convictions in the pit of their stomachs about

the need for fighting it. He said: "About five per cent." (I tried this question later on a Boston assistant editor. He said: "Twenty or twenty-five per cent.")

The business of Government in U.S.A.—and there's much Government, Federal, state, city, etc.—is often so inefficient or so touched with graft that people expect nothing to work well that's run by the Government, and they are pushed further and further towards unlimited private enterprise. He said that in his young days there were cities where no judge could hold office unless the crime gangs approved of him. I asked: "Is there any hope for this country, then?" He said: "Yes, great hopes. Fine things are done. The people are all right. The people's standard of living goes on rising. Even Big Business has something to be said for it—it has delivered the goods both in peace and in this war." He thought Americans will accept our case if put factually—we must seize our opportunities of hanging stuff on the right peg—*Desert Victory* might well, in his view, have had additions made to its commentary for American consumption. Understatement is no good, and saying nothing is no good. We've had two-thirds as many civilian casualties as U.S.A. has had in her armed forces, and inasmuch as our population is one-third America's, we've had, in proportion, twice as many.

He spoke of the amount of violence in the nation; in Britain we had 300 homicides in a year; America had 15,000.

I said, on ignorance, that it seemed to me the papers are so big here that nobody reads them; people would be better informed if papers were a quarter or a tenth the size. (I've talked this over with two editors since. They are inclined to agree. The *Atlantic Monthly* is not satisfied with the part played by the American Press and is offering prizes for essays on the Press's functions. As a shrewd journalist said to me: "For twelve years we've had Roosevelt's Government and throughout that time ninety per cent. of the Press has been against it. That doesn't make sense. Again, a book has been recently published called *Under Cover* which rocks the country—a book about underground Nazi and Jap machinations, yet the Press had never revealed them hitherto. In the Middle West a number of papers are printed in German. What are they saying? The Press doesn't tell us." The same criticisms, in a less degree, can be directed at our British Press, too.)

To return to my first informant—he made the point that U.S.A. has 17,000,000 Catholic votes—perhaps the strongest

pressure group there is. It is sometimes said that they can't put a President in, but they can keep him out. The Catholics have no doubt exercised a profound influence in the war in North Africa, Italy and so on. Again, the Irish win seats in cities and one sees headlines, "Irish win so many seats." Never "The English win so many." There are German, Italian, Polish, Irish and Scandinavian parties—but never an English party. Anglophobia goes very deep—it's like anti-Semitism. People are anti-British who've never seen an Englishman—they've merely remembered something their mother or grandmother told them.

He asked what I made of the American State Department and its actions in North Africa, etc. I said I had misgivings about them, as have many other English people. He said that nobody knows how this department works. The President, being a great guy, can never sack anybody. All is mystery.

I see that Roosevelt says not an ounce of butter has gone to anybody save Russia.

*Pravda* has been animadverting on an article by Wendell Willkie. The *New York Times* is pained at *Pravda*. Breakers ahead on the subject of frontiers in Eastern Europe? An editor tells me that he has been trying to get an article out of the Russians on post-war aviation. They won't play—not yet.

I am asked by a Leftist writer if I have heard of fights in England between American white and black soldiers in which English soldiers have joined in on the side of the blacks? No, I have not.

Many motor-cars carry an aerial on the dashboard as if a fishing-rod were stuck there.

At a private dinner the other evening, the maidservant was a black woman from the West Indies. She hovered just behind us, chinking with laughter now and then, and once joining in the talk. Delightful. Much less master and man in this country than in England.

A consul said to me: "We've the Americans' respect. What we've got to win is their liking. They find most of us stuffed shirts."

I found Henry Wallace as likeable as I had hoped. In appearance he reminded me somewhat of T. Thompson, the Lancashire

writer—big squarish face, lot of tough-looking hair; full of burliness and vigour. This was a surprise—I'd expected a more fragile, intellectual man. But he comes of farming stock; origins in Scotland, Ulster, and father and grandfather powers in the corn belt of the Middle West, where they started a farming paper still running. He's got keen humour. Henry Wallace gave me his *Century of the Common Man*, and signed it for me to James L. Hogson. That's a new name for me, though I've been nearly every variation of Hodson in my time.

January 8th, 1944.

The journey to Boston was—what I saw of it—grand; brown woods, shaven rounded small hills, frozen lakes, snow coating the landscape. A touch of Switzerland about it. Much beauty. Painted white wooden houses. A note of gaiety that lifts the heart. I slept part of the way, for my New York hotel was on a street where silence never reigned. I've been reading Raymond Chandler's crime novel, *The Big Sleep*, but halfway through discarded it. It's most clever, but after a while I got tired of the crooks who live in it—almost obscene in their tricks of habit and speech and the rackets they run, one of them the selling of ornate obscene books. (I was asked last night if I knew that America had had a racket in improper living pictures.)

Boston has an amusing saying relative to its old families:

*'Here's to the city of Boston  
The home of the bean and the cod,  
Where Lowell speaks only to Cabot  
And Cabot speaks only to God.'*

A newer version uses Koussevitsky instead of God, Koussevitsky being conductor of the Symphony Orchestra.

I've been learning something of Harvard University's Nieman's Fellowships for journalists. About a dozen newspaper-men—editors, city editors, reporters—come to the university for a year, do pretty much as they wish in the shape of taking lectures and study, and enjoy a discussion or debate once a week. Top-notch folk from all over U.S.A. come to talk to them. Admirable. Americans tend to rank the importance of newspaper-men higher than we do. These dozen men are chosen from twenty times the number. They submit pieces of their work and write down what they want to do at Harvard and what they hope to get from the year spent there. On that, plus an interview some-

times, the selection is made. Usually the men are fairly young—until last year the limit was forty years old, but this year there's a man turned fifty. They come from all over America, and an attempt is made to get a few from the small papers. Some study labour, some economics, some philosophy—what they will. They take examinations in their subjects, if they wish. But no degrees are given, of course. The Fellowship, within reason, pays them the salary they were drawing on their paper (one or two have drawn from the Fellowship 125 dollars a week, but round about 75 is nearer the average). Their papers give them a year's leave of absence. After the hurly-burly and scramble of newspaper life, a cloistered existence at Harvard must be paradise; yes, even though it be not so cloistered. I'm told, however, that when they return to their papers they are not always so popular as might be supposed. "So you've got some new ideas, have you? Well, we can get along without 'em here." That's the way it goes sometimes. Old human nature with its jealousies and frailties won't be suppressed you see.

As I drive about the snow-covered streets, old Georgian houses are pointed out; a chapel-like small brick building with the lion and unicorn perching thereon dating back to 1800 or so; the fields whereon George Washington first paraded his troops to fight the English. I see rows of houses with three or four steps leading to front doors and bay-windowed rooms that might be English. From my bedroom window I look at a tall fourteen-story building made of old brown bricks. My hotel has a room named "The Pub"—a bar, small tables and wooden chairs. I lunched in a restaurant where we sat in tall pews—a touch of the "Old Cock" of Fleet Street about it. I have a printed notice to hang on my bedroom door, "Please go 'way and let me sleep." I rode underground—but only about two flights down—on a bulky old tram that was Victorian. This tramcar comes up from time to time like a whale wanting to breathe. An assistant editor I called on looked Old English—a fancy waistcoat, pale yellow with lines squared on it; a green tweed coat.

First taximan: "Sure we thought we could live all alone in the world—find we can't do ut." Second ditto: "Well, guess we're just sorry for everybody in the war—them fighting and that. I got a lot o' nephews in it."

Sketch of a character: "He used to spend 600,000 or 800,000 dollars a year to stir things up for himself—special trains and the rest of it."

Dined last night with a business man who says he's a Socialist and adds that he's a rare breed in America. I got him on to India, asked him why Americans attack us so strongly on that. He said: "We think you're hypocritical about it—you talk about your 'responsibility for India.' But you went to India for your own ends. We ourselves had to fight you for our independence; we won it and got along all right. Why shouldn't India have it and get along all right, too? If they want to be free to fight one another, why can't they be?" I said: "I, as a radical, think about many things as you do. But how much good would it have done to give India her independence during the war and have India overrun by the Japs? If anybody suggests to me that the Indians would be better under the Japs or the Germans or even the Americans, I shan't agree with him. She'll get her independence as soon as the war is over—and although I agree she should have it if she wants it, I believe for a while she'll make a fine mess of things." We kept our tempers, but all the same a touch of feeling developed.

*January 9th, 1944.*

I've been inquiring further—or trying to—into why people dislike us English. I sat yesterday in a wooden house among the snow-covered countryside. Very beautiful; sun bright as Switzerland; log fire. Wood floors, rugs, English tea (a rare thing), talk of flying down to New York, mail brought in by the odd-man; chains on the car wheels, snow dripping through the roof near the doorway. Our hostess, forty-odd, very intelligent, said she liked the English—we have poise (she said), are sure of ourselves, don't argue unless we know our ground, know how to make ourselves cosy and comfortable, build a tennis court wherever we are, even in desert or jungle; our husbands and wives are companions, but our children are neglected, whereas a lot of American children are spoilt. All this got us nowhere except that I suspect she finds us too stuffy, too cold and reserved. She was lively, talkative, told us how a man in the hospital where she occasionally works was an "old lech" who said: "Can't we have two pillows, dear; one for you, one for me?" Her daughter, who looked sixteen, came in wearing ski-ing clothes, changed into a tweed coat and tartan kilt, with bare legs, and socks. She lit her cigarette and leaned in front of the fire; said she's reading *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*—reads omnivorously.

My own host thinks anti-British feeling is worse than a year ago; points out how this neighbourhood has become more foreign. "This nation is no longer Anglo-Saxon. Boston is the

most Irish town in the country. The Irish revolution was financed from here; the Catholic Church all over the world gets driving force from here; Catholics here keep anti-British feeling going as a weapon with which to hold the Irish Catholics together. Catholics breed because they're told; Poles and Finns breed because they like it. If you look at the names on a school roll of lads joined up, not twenty per cent. are Anglo-Saxon; it was different twenty-five years ago. Anglo-Saxons aren't breeding like the others. Then there's jealousy in business. America has her own supply of twenty million hides a year; Britain has  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million; so in dividing up hides from the rest of the world Britain is getting seventy per cent. of the supply. American business men say we Americans have been out-smarted on that." He showed me a copy of *Collier's Weekly* carrying an article by Senator Brewster asserting that on oil we've out-smarted them, too. Now it sounds comic to you and me that we're so damnably clever, but the Yanks take it seriously.

My host's son in the Army is home for twenty-four hours. He was enlightening, too. He said: "It starts in school—year after year we get history, the Revolution, the fight against England—Washington, Jefferson." I said: "That's all right; nobody objects to that. You fought tyranny and you were right." He said: "Then we're taught that down the ages you've always been robbers—worse than anybody else; you've grabbed everything—worse than the Germans." Um.

I asked my host why Roosevelt is so hated by so many. He said, Well, the employers think he's played into the hands of Labour and although they admit Labour is on the up-grade and that they have to work in with Labour, yet they blame Roosevelt. They say, too, that his public works schemes were wasteful (yet they were better than our dole, for U.S.A. did get *some* return for money spent). Again, they think Roosevelt is in our British pocket; and that doesn't make him loved, either. A lot of 'em still believe America has been dragged into the war—they won't "think out" Pearl Harbour any more than the workmen will I quoted earlier. About wages: in this neighbourhood pre-war a lot of wages were low—some women in factories earned as low a wage as 9 dollars, men 12 dollars a week. Nowadays, men get, say, 50 dollars plus overtime. You can't now get a man to work in the garden and woods "odding about" for less than 6 dollars a day, and they're hard to get at that. Factories work forty-eight hours; men like to work overtime beyond that, and growl when they can't.



My host bought a fur cap yesterday with ear-flaps—a regular hunter's cap; needs a gun to go with it; says it will come in handy for his coastguarding, which he does one day a week. Volunteers do examination of incoming boats, too. This East Coast seaboard has its air raid practices, which are supposed to be good for morale. I wonder? If you satisfy your conscience and mind doing cockeyed and silly things which you know are cockeyed, may not that be a brake on doing things more important?

Ernie Pyle, a U.S. war correspondent in Italy, gets close to the human side; quotes a soldier who says he's going to make his kid jump off a high shed to break the arches of his feet, and read till he's half-blind so he won't be fit for a draft when *he* grows up. That's the sort of stuff only printed as a rule when the war is over.

A U.S. soldier who has a six-minute speech to deliver on passing out from a course of training asked me what he should talk about. I said: "Your father and I have had two wars. Two wars in one lifetime is more than enough. If you don't want two wars also, tell 'em we've all got to stick together. Tell 'em we don't have to be in love with one another to put the fire out when it starts—only we must be sure to start putting it out early before it gets a firm hold." He said: "Do you mean some sort of a League of Nations again?" I said: "Sure."

A good many of the wealthy people of Boston have had two or three shots at marriage. Sometimes the new ménages are only a mile or two away from the old ones. Their children learn very early how tough life can be. I've met one or two such children looking old for their years, old and rather sad. Is it well they should learn thus early how the earth can move beneath their feet? Maybe.

Some of the American soldier lads have been experimenting with smoking *marijuana* weed, which makes you drunk or doped.

The *Atlantic Monthly* pays forty times as much for its articles as in the old days, when Mark Twain got 10 dollars for a page of 700 words. Articles used to be 5,000 words—often are still. That length was hit upon originally because it was thought that was as much as a man could read aloud without getting tired.

An Englishman who served throughout the last war in the Yeomanry tells me of the last morning of that war. He was sent

off as a young officer with a troop at 4 a.m. on November 11th, 1918, to keep contact with the Germans. This was in Belgium. The enemy had blown demolitions—holed every road; only horses across country could bring rations, and not always then; aircraft were occasionally used to drop supplies. (This is news to me.) On this last morning they came to a stream too wide to jump; bridges on either side were held. He said to his men, "Out of the way, you damn fools," put his horse to the stream, rode in—and sank till only the horse's head was free. It took a long time to get them out. They now tried the bridges again and found the Germans had retired. It was then that a British officer galloped up saying that later on that morning, there'd be an armistice. This was their first inkling of what was afoot. They had been thinking of charging a village, but now the captain said: "What the hell! No use getting killed now." So they didn't charge. At 10.30 another officer galloped up shouting, "Armistice at eleven." I asked how the troops felt. He said: "Some went a bit wild. The Belgians dug up wine they'd had buried for years. But as for me, I felt how strange it was. Where did we go now?—we'd been doing this job for years. At three minutes past eleven the Germans put down gas shells on the flank and tear-gas drifted over us—their last fling. No, we never talked to the Germans. Every three days they retired a certain number of miles and we followed, keeping our distance."

To-day it was "three degrees above"—that's 29 degrees of frost. This wooden house has a furnace beneath it from which warm air rises through grids let into the floor. When my feet grow cold I stand on a grid. My bedroom has no heat. I was awake at 6 a.m. putting on a pullover. But I prefer this to a hotel bedroom, which is as warm as Cairo in summer.

My American soldier gets a quart of milk a day in camp as part of his ration; says he's a buck private—gets 50 dollars a month. The flying men call plump girls the P.24's, the slender ones P.39's and the fast ones P.47's. I read that at a shipyard in Portland, Oregon, a "No work, no woo" movement has been started by the girls. The girls won't go out with men unless their work card is fully marked up.

Last night I met two English naval officers. Their "refaned" accent after listening to American speech for three weeks, sounded awfully queer and affected. One of them was Number One on a new cruiser that did some hard training, especially

in shooting at a wind-sleeve drawn by an aircraft; results fine. But out in the Atlantic, when a German aircraft came over, the guns didn't fire. He said this wasn't, perhaps, surprising on the first occasion (though it sounds surprising to me), but on the second day it happened again; and on the third day also. Everybody was yelling "Fire!" and nothing was happening. This aircraft flew almost between the cruiser's masts—and still nothing happened. He said: "I was on the bridge next the Captain, expecting him to fall down livid. But what he said was, and it endeared him to us: 'The tale's going to get round the *Luftwaffe* that this ship is a bloody bird sanctuary!'"

Phrase used by an American woman: "Then she put on her knitting face."

My host's two children, aged nineteen and eighteen, are charming—handsome, quiet, modest, though so American in speech I cannot always tell what they say. Drawl and lack of incisive articulation make it difficult to hear. The girl is studying languages and sociology—hopes to do rehabilitation work in Europe, post-war. She's reading *Mother India* at the moment.

I met a man to-day who's earned his living as golfer, pool-player, tap-dancer, cowboy, card-player, and is now manager of a factory. Americans engage in a diversity of pursuits to a degree unknown to us.

*January 11th, 1944.*

I spent an hour with two bankers, both under fifty—very pleasant men, but I persuaded them to be frank. They said that American business men feel that Lord Keynes put over on the President his notions of deficit finance—notions which our British Government refused to accept and knew were nonsense. But Roosevelt swallowed them. I said: "So that you think we English are subtle and Machiavellian, persuading you to swallow medicine we know will do you harm?" They said, Yes, that was about it. They thought, too, that our business men have a wider grasp of world affairs than have America's and know better how diplomacy and politics and business are woven together; so that our men put it over theirs. They admire our men, but distrust them.

Another point. They said: "If you want good relations post-war, send back all the machinery we've lent you—and all the

jeeps. If Americans travel in the post-war world and see the earth littered with our stuff, they'll be furious. If you can't send it back, you'd better burn it or blow it up or bury it in the sea. We resent being Santa Claus to the whole world. We feel that Roosevelt has lost all sense of money, and we know we shall have to pay in the long run."

Again: "We want more facts about Britain. Do you, for example, get relief from income tax on your insurance premiums? Some here say, Yes, some say, No." (I explained the position.) "We want to know about your food and your taxes and your casualties—subjects about which we know next to nothing." I told them of our munitions workers' wages. They said that some of their munitions workers get four times pre-war wages, a few of them as much as 150 dollars a week. Negroes in Georgia who got 12 dollars a week now get 36 dollars; makes 'em uppish, they said.

One banker said that American people haven't their hearts in the war—they don't know what it's all about; if they had their hearts in it, output could rise 100 per cent. overnight. The other interjected, however, that 90 per cent. of people are behind the war. I asked whether the stories of German atrocities are discounted. They said they are—that atrocity tales were overdone in the last war, and now nobody believes them. On Russia they thought the only hope of getting together was to send twenty-five to fifty children to Russia out of every community of 50,000—and hope the children would like Russia and come back and say so.

Returning for a moment to our British-American relationship, they said they were not worried over our lads in the field getting together—the soldiers would be all right; it was the Home Front in America that was the trouble. The film, *Mrs. Miniver*, did most good, because it had heart and emotion in it. "Get your films down to the level of the ten-year-olds; *that's* the level most folk live on. People read the comic strips—not much else. A hundred millions go to films every week. Give us some films of English life."

I've discussed this with other's more expert. One who has studied the subject said: "Our British methods of putting things over are hopeless—too decorous, too much stamped with the Civil Service. We need a good comic strip, good radio programmes—why don't we do a comic programme on mutual aid?—and we need good *commercial* films—we'd better enlist Sam Goldwyn. Have you seen *North Star*?—it's like nothing on

land or sea in Russia, yet it convinces you of what Russians are doing in their war. We are oh, so terribly genteel and dignified—and it gets us nowhere.”

An editor said: “We got a lot of stuff from you on reverse lend-lease—argumentative stuff. No good. Our people won’t swallow it that way. You might convince those who don’t need convincing—not the others.” He spoke of the inarticulate masses; nobody knows what they’re thinking. These are the folk who elect Roosevelt against 70 per cent. or more of the newspapers’ advice. Two million read the *New York Daily News*, which damns Roosevelt—and the bulk vote for Roosevelt.

A second editor, most friendly: “The urgent need just now is for you to explain what your commitments are, so that when the argument begins again that America is finding three-fourths of the invasion troops, that argument can be exploded.” He thought that the situation *vis-à-vis* Russia has improved; America is going to be realistic.

A student of the New England scene said: “The Irish anti-British movement in Boston is declining a bit because the Irish have switched to attacking the Jews. We had an anti-Jewish riot not long ago. Anti-Semitism is growing. On the other hand, the Jews are turning anti-British—condemning us for not establishing faster and better the Jewish home in Palestine. The Consul a while back was invited to a great gathering in aid of Jewish refugees, but it developed into a condemnation of Britain, whereupon the audience got to its feet moved with indignation against us.”

The *Boston Globe*, sober, liberal in tone, has ten comic strips!

The Civil War is still a real topic. When Southerners come north, I’m assured that within an hour it’s not uncommon for the Civil War to be discussed, and with some feeling.

I wonder how our script writers in ‘Hollywood who haven’t seen England for years imagine they can interpret England to the world? Hitchcock, the Director, is going back to look at England. The whole lot ought to go, for a time at all events.

Last night I was a guest at the Tavern Club, a club of writers, professors, doctors, lawyers and business men belonging to the older families in Boston—a club mainly of Republicans, though

there are liberal minds there, too. The principal guest was Joseph Grew, formerly U.S. Ambassador in Tokio. Harley Granville Barker was another guest—he's lecturing at Harvard on Shakespeare at the moment. Grew and I spoke. The club has kinship with the Savile, London, in its sort of membership, and in the custom of all sitting round a long table, but at the Tavern the table is larger and finer; last night it was lit with candles, a candelabra in the middle and dimness beyond lit by solitary flames. Across the table from me was a Cabot of the family that helped to discover America in the sixteenth-hundreds. On my right was a professor of Harvard, educated in part at Cambridge and talking like an Englishman. Indeed, all evening I felt that both my feet were on the ground. Here were faces Old English, voices Old English, one or two check jackets, and (I was told) a varied assortment of headgear. One who walked out with us when it was over wore a dark cloth cap, like a Lancashire workman. An old gentleman leaned across the polished table and said what a wonderful man Mr. Churchill is. I said: "Some of us think Mr. Roosevelt is fine, too." But I doubt if he liked that. They were delighted when I told them how El Alamein could not have been won without Sherman tanks, and that the moral of our new Tunisian film is our two nations' co-operation.

After dinner we signed the guests' book—a book bound in leather that dates far back—it was falling to pieces, and has been re-bound. There's a page wherein Jack London has written in a sprawling hand "Jack London—yours for the revolution." Underneath that, H. G. Wells has written in his beautiful small writing: "There won't be no revolution." The date is 1906. I enjoyed this evening; people were very kind. I told them there is nothing we cannot do if we, Russia, they and China stick together.

To-day I lunched at the Museum of Fine Arts with my host of last night, Mr. W. G. Constable, who, curiously enough, commanded for a brief while a battalion of Lancashire Fusiliers in the last war. With us at table was a Canadian who was attached to another battalion of that regiment in Arras in those far-off days. How strange! Three out of six at table with Lancashire associations. I looked at the Departments of Egyptology and of Painting. Here are painted half a dozen of the first Presidents of this country, Washington, Jefferson, among them. I remarked on how tightly Washington compresses his lips, which led my companion to say: "Well, in those days

a man often lost his teeth, and often couldn't or wouldn't have them replaced, and perhaps that accounts for it." But not altogether. There's devil in him.<sup>1</sup> Ancestors of Boston's old families are hung here, determined-looking, hardbitten men—aye, and the women, too; not many good looks but a lot of character and a touch of arrogance—the sort of people to carry through the rebellion. I'm told that when their descendants dress-up and put on ancient clothes, the forbears spring to life—the faces are much the same. In the Egyptology rooms most of the dug-up pieces are conventionalised sculptures of men and women; the Egyptians were no beauties by my standards; there's just one that has life in it, of a prince of 2610 B.C.—small, aquiline nose, rather full, pursed lips, hard eyes. An Egyptologist said: "He's like a modern gangster, intelligent but extremely hard-boiled."

The Washington Department of Justice a few days ago filed an action to "strike a major blow" against the international cartel system. Is this another of the sorts of things that gets Roosevelt hated? On the same day it was announced that jet-driven planes without propellers are being built. These aircraft flew on tests in England over two years ago. A boy who saw them told me he wondered for a moment whether he had lost his wits. Aircraft flying without propellers!

The *Nation* animadverts on the dollar-a-year men in the Petroleum Administration. Harold Ickes had said he hadn't any of these men who work in Government departments for virtually no salary, and draw wages from their former firms. Ickes's deputy, says the *Nation*, has now admitted that his salary with the Government is 10,000 dollars, but that he draws 47,500 dollars as compensation from Standard Oil. The suggestion is that such men are busy looking after the interests of their former employers. Now we in England also have men in Government departments working for nothing and still drawing wages from their old firms. Is it wise? But wouldn't they look after their old friends, anyhow, retainers or no retainers?

American phrase: "He's all the sky from knee-high left to grow in."

January 13th, 1944.

I'm now in the train *en route* to Detroit, writing on a let-down table in a sleeping compartment. I lunched at Harvard Uni-

<sup>1</sup> Actually I believe a set of Washington's false teeth are still preserved.

versity as guest of the Harvard American Defence group, a liberal-minded group of professors and others. More women than men present to-day. I asked the Chairman, Professor Perry, what he thought of Roosevelt's message to Congress yesterday. He said he thought it sound. So do I. In it the President calls for a National Service Act, much on the lines of ours in England. Roosevelt says that millions of Americans are not in this war and he believes they want to be. He hopes this new Act would prevent strikes. I think he's wrong there, for our Act in Britain hasn't prevented them. He says that over-confidence cost America 1,000 planes last June and July, meaning that production fell by that amount. He has some good phrases, that "necessitous men are not free men—people who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made." Again, "a return to the so-called normalcy of the 1920's would mean that though we had conquered the enemy on the battlefield, we had yielded to the spirit of Fascism here at home." Several of the newspapers say that Roosevelt's demand for power to "draft labour" has stunned Congress. Leaders of the two great trade union groups, A.F. of L. and C.I.O., are already denouncing it, saying it would strip them of gains that have taken years to obtain. The controversy is likely to be acute. We are reminded that the Supreme Court has clearly defined enforced servitude for a private master as slavery. Against that, it's argued that the Act would end the tension between Service men and organised labour. One columnist declares that here is the entire New Deal in a new nutshell—part of a political programme that may be the President's platform for a fourth term.

But, for an Englishman, it gives emphasis to his already firm impression, that U.S.A. is not yet in this war on a comparable scale with Britain.

At the Harvard lunch a journalist who worked for ten years in Madrid spoke of the dangers of Spain becoming a focal point for forming a Fascist *bloc* in South America. What would be the good of defeating Fascism in Italy, Germany, and Japan if we allowed it to become firmly established in South America? He discounted Franco's slight moves in our direction as our victory becomes more certain. I had to leave this lunch to catch this train, but in thanking them said that I was in agreement with what had been said, and told them of J. M. N. Jeffries's anecdote: that two or three years ago the common people of Spain were saying ironically: "This year nobody eats, next year only El Caudillo will eat, the year after only those



speaking English will eat"—indicating that they were sure long ago that we shall win this war and that Franco will not reign for ever.

When a large English convoy arrived recently at Halifax, after a stormy and dangerous crossing, the shore radio happened to be putting out Blake's "Jerusalem." An eye-witness says: "Those on my ship heard it and began to sing it, and people were so moved they fell on their knees. Soon the great hymn was sweeping across the harbour from ship to ship."

American trains run smoothly, but Lord! when they actually start the jerk can be like a train crash. That jerk happens occasionally as I write.

The menu card affords a good example of florid American writing. An invitation to buy War Bonds talks of the national flag—"Those stars that make you feel just as free as the stars in the wide deep night, and those stripes that are bars of blood to any dictator who may try to change it." The flag is "the symbol of liberty and decency and fair dealing for everyone. Just a piece of cloth—that's all it is until you put your soul into it and give it meaning."

This is on the back of the menu. On the front is written: "May the thunder of war trains echoing through the Mohawk Valley prove the prelude to enduring peace when not only America, but all the world, can sing with thankful heart. . . ." Amen to that.

Americans—or a good many of them, at all events—are at once hard-boiled and highly sentimental. An emotional people whose hearts perhaps more than their heads must be appealed to, they have an energy which, once let loose, is as though you had split the atom. What are you to do with individuals who, when a character in a comic strip gets married, send baby carriages along to the newspaper office? Or who will send wreaths and flowers when a comic strip character dies? Compared with the insanity of these folk, those who'll wait outside Buckingham Palace for twelve hours in order to see the King, are comparatively sensible. Yet what a wealth of warm-heartedness is here in America! To tap it is like tapping the Niagara Falls. So that sincerity matters more than what is said. They are as a people whose great lumbering body is harassed and hindered by sores, but just as a whale cannot be prevented from tearing along by the body pests which infuriate and irritate it, so

America, despite graft, corruption and Government motivated by pressure groups, rolls on to accomplishment. Children tend to be idolised—foolishly, as I think. My lunch neighbour, a woman professor, told me how Henry Ford showed her over his factory recently. "In one room he called to a workman, asking, 'Have you got that little box finished?' Ford had been at the White House recently, and the President had given him a piece of candy for the children and he was having a special little box made for it. Imagine doing that in the midst of all else he has to do!" It's in keeping with this worship of children, and that in turn is in keeping with a woman-ridden country, for that is what America, to some degree, is. By the way, I've talked to two cultivated women in the past few days, both of whom were half-drunk.

We had listened to a man who read a long speech. My English companion said: "Americans are absolutely unboreable!"

A Boston editor I called on was working in shirt sleeves at a small table in a litter of cuttings, scissors, gum and what-not, just as he might have been in Belfast or Manchester. No more side, or gadgets. He was constantly interrupted by the telephone and by his staff. If I hadn't known I was in Boston I should have said I was in the *Slocombe Examiner* office. A man had been carried into court on a stretcher and had been photographed there. A voice at the other end was trying to persuade him to keep the picture out. He said, as all good news editors say, "I'm making no promises." He turned to me: "How can you keep a sensation like that out?" Quite right. If newspapers printed only what folk would like them to print, they'd be unreadable. Nor would they be the searchlight on abuses they sometimes are.

I've been in Detroit twelve hours. Here are some statements made to me to-day: "Detroit is the cruellest city in the world. I've been in plenty, and I know. Heavy drinkers, hard workers. That body there—finished with, carry it out. That's how they think and behave. Then Ford—Ford's a nice old man—charming—only don't get in his way. In this town you can be making 50,000 dollars a year—but the moment you stop earning it, you're 'out'—finished with."

Another view, this time of an American trades unionist: "Detroit is the centre of American Fascism. No, Fascism isn't

dead. There are the Fascists bolstered up by employers and the Catholic Fascists to whom everything Russian is bad, besides the Fascists definitely Nazi. Here in Detroit, the Italian Fascists are thought rather nice." He showed me an article in *Ammunition*, the official publication of the Automobile Workers' Union, charging with anti-American activities certain papers mailed through the post, among them *The Cross and the Flag*, *The Western Voice*, *The Defender* and *The Gaelic American*, which, the article asserts, advocates strict isolationism and denounces the British, Russians, Roosevelt and any kind of international collaboration. The article in *Ammunition* calls them voices of disruption, says they want to "divide and confuse us."

I asked him if, in his view, the trades unionists are solid behind the war. He said, "Yes, but they would be stronger if it had been made clearer to them what this war is about, if our war aims had been plainly stated." On the Negro problem he said: "Negroes in this city have been housed in the worst quarters and kept as confined there as in a European ghetto." He asked if, in Britain, a skilled workman in a reserved occupation would be in danger of being drafted for the Army when promoted to trade union official—as was the fact here often enough. I said I thought it pretty certain he would not. I said that in England most employers accept and, indeed, welcome trade unions and collective bargaining. He said that in U.S.A. the reverse is true. At Ford's, now a union factory, he believes it certain that the employers' spies are everywhere in the works and even among the union officials. Now all this to English ears sounds almost fantastic, life in the jungle. But few people here would think it impossible.

I am advised never to use the word "Socialist" in Detroit, because the word "Socialist" here means what we mean by "Communist." One of our visiting English workmen has fallen into this error.

An air marshal, asked what he thought of American newspapers, replied: "Your newspapers are too thick and your toilet paper is too thin." This didn't go down very well. But Americans will take a joke against themselves. One of our speakers has tried the old one about the American soldier who, asked in England what he was doing, rejoined, "Oh, winning the war for you." To which the Englishman returned, "How well you speak English for a Russian." This has been greeted with shouts of laughter.

A successful remark during the great depression was made by a British diplomat. He said, "I see on your half-dollar pieces the device, 'In God we trust.' I feel that you would have appreciated even more a device, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' " This quite tickled them.

I lunched with a newspaper business manager. He asked: "Didn't you feel in the worst times certain that at last America would come in on your side?" I said that I couldn't honestly say that I, personally, did. He said he felt sure that Winston, before taking on the Premiership, had a telephone talk with Roosevelt and got F. D. R.'s backing. We here knew nothing about the guns and rifles we sent you till long afterwards."

I'm informed that at his first cabinet meeting after taking office as Premier, Winston recited the grim facts of what we lacked. Then he added: "Personally, I find it inspiring—and now to business." One present said he found those words like a glass of champagne.

Two remarks to-day: "It's to Detroit that many a statesman comes when he wants to make a pronouncement. We know here six months ahead what Washington will do."

Again: "Organised labour has a programme for a thirty-hours' week."

A Labour publicist gave me his ideas on what we should do to improve our propaganda. Thus:

Tell us more about what your women are doing.

Talk to Labour more. Break down your propaganda.

We want to know more about British social legislation and its background—how it came about.

Many of your pamphlets are too long. Give us six pages with plenty of pictures.

Use the comic strips idea. We've a pamphlet of our own fighting anti-Semitism done in comic-strip fashion.

What still rankles is the notion that you are trying to fight the war without losing men. You are contrasted with the Russians to your disadvantage. Tell us what men you lost in the last war, too. We don't know.

Get your propaganda into the war factories—that's where it's wanted. That's where the anti-British stuff is.

Appoint a joint British-American labour committee to advise on the right propaganda.

Get some Scots voices over the radio when you speak—surprising how many Scots are in this place.

Send some of your war veterans, working-men who've been wounded, round our war plants. And send some of your women in uniform—good-looking ones. The Russian women had a great effect here.

Let Americans know you are interested in *what* happens here, but not *how* it happens.

*January 15th, 1944.*

At the end of my second day in Detroit I cannot say I have altogether fallen in love with the city. But it's a fascinating place. Many of its streets are wide and spacious, its few skyscrapers are high and fine, the winter sunshine is brilliant, the offices I enter are often palatial, the food is excellent. I am not, however, long permitted to forget I'm in something of a city jungle. A shrewd man said this morning: "This is, in many ways, a dishonest country—trickery, if you can get away with it, is O.K." (But this is true in greater or less degree of all countries.) "An English trade unionist," he said, "was shocked to find that an American trade union he visited hadn't had a general meeting for several years. Meetings are sometimes framed—who will say what." Of trade union leaders' salaries, he said a man like John L. Lewis (of Welsh origin), leader of the miners, would probably draw 25,000 dollars a year salary, but an unlimited amount of expenses. A total of 150,000 dollars a year he thought quite possible. Later in the day I asked a trade union leader what in fact he himself draws. He said 150 dollars a week plus 30 dollars expenses plus a motor-car. In English currency that is £45 a week plus a car. That's not excessive here.

I had lunched with an advertising club running a campaign for funds for infantile paralysis (Roosevelt's disease). I had jokingly told the Chairman I had beaten several hasty retreats in this war from France, Burma, etc., so he introduced me as one who had run away from many countries—typical American wisecracking. He was a Hearst Press employee, so I tackled him later about Hearst's antipathy to England. He denied it—said Hearst was pro-American, that was all; that, after Dunkirk, Hearst wrote an article saying that just as a host of animals called lemmings tried in ancient days to swim the Channel to invade England and were lost in the sea, so if Hitler's hosts tried they also would be drowned and overcome. That article,

he said, did as much to raise English spirits as Winston's call to arms. I said: "Far be it from me to belittle a friendly act of Mr. Hearst, and if he wrote that article, I am obliged to him, but I must tell you I never heard of it and if anybody imagines we needed Mr. Hearst to keep our hearts up, he's under an illusion." We walked across to the Hearst newspaper, and I met the editor and his assistant and the publisher. Few English newspaper offices are so well arranged. I told them America would be better-informed if their newspapers were a quarter the size. They agreed, saying Mr. Hearst had always gone in for brevity. I said also that it made no sense that our sons are conscripted while we do what we like. They agreed that, too.

At the lunch a film had been shown—a War Department film depicting how the actual fighting and the making of munitions are integrated. Admirable. A group talked to me afterwards—a political writer, two advertisers, and an Irishman who was hot about Eire still being neutral. What excuse had she? What was behind it? Wouldn't it be safe for her to come in now, since the danger of being bombed was reduced? I said I thought she ought to be fighting with us, but that, anyhow, scores of thousands of her men are volunteers in our armed forces, and that de Valera's situation had not been easy—that had he come in two years ago, fighting within Eire's own borders among her own people would almost certainly have followed, and in the long run our cause might have been damaged, since that fighting would have put a brake on U.S.A. coming our way. After this, we had to go and drink a couple of "Old Fashioneds"—Bourbon whisky, orange, cherry and ice. What a country it is, to be sure! I'm beginning to say, as Americans say, "Glad to see you, sir!" But I sense, too, from time to time a little suspicion or active dislike.

This afternoon I met two trade union leaders—the first solid and almost English in his quietness. He said: "I blame you and us for permitting this war—maybe us more than you." He said, too, that it's been computed there are 150 different nationalities working in the motor-car factories of Detroit, and he obviously thought that was about correct. I said I didn't realise so many nations existed. He spoke with bitterness of internecine strife within the unions and how that had weakened the workers' position from about 1936 on. Of an opposing union leader's signature, he said it wasn't worth the ink in it—"I can't shake hands with men who'll put a knife into you as you walk out."

The second talked, *inter alia*, of Wendell Willkie. Willkie, he said, rose from nothing to be a clever lawyer and became close

to the Big Bosses. "The Bosses always have a man on both sides the fence—they helped Roosevelt to get in. Presidents are chosen years before." Had I seen the Russian attack on Willkie in *Pravda*—that was a put-up job to help Willkie by persuading people in U.S.A. that Willkie isn't too close to Russia, following the compliments paid Russia by Willkie in his *One World*. (A trifle more jungle here.) He had a spittoon at his feet which he used now and then with precision. I found him likeable. Talk ranged over the U.S.A. Socialists, who, he said, were captured years ago by the Communists. To-day the American Socialists were intellectuals; those who are akin to our British Socialists were here called Labour; they favoured public ownership of utilities. In his view, American employers were still hoping to break the trade unions.

(Let me pause here to note that American cigarettes burn faster than any I have known; put one down and it smokes itself. Yet I prefer them to ours—more flavour.)

I asked him about Roosevelt's demands for a National Service Act. He explained why they're opposed; said that production programmes are already being curtailed, so what need was there for this virtual slavery? I think he sees the hand of employers behind it, an attempt to dragoon the men. Some employers here, he said, having been refused material for consumer goods, are manufacturing parts of pin tables and music boxes just over the Mexican border and bringing them back here for assembling. A good deal of experimental and research work is being done in research departments, he said, with a view to post-war production. We talked of strikes—he said that last year 60,000 men on strike in Detroit went up to Michigan to shoot deer—maybe they didn't do much actual shooting, but lived in shacks and drank and played crap dice and hired others to do the shooting.

We talked of Russia. He showed me a Christmas card from a man who, he said, has twenty-five million dollars in the Packard company. This millionaire has written his own verses on that card, the theme of them gratitude to Russia and the need for post-war co-operation!

Phrase much used here: "That's fine and dandy!"

I called on Dr. Henry, Vice-President of Wayne University. Lecture hours are from 8 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. A large proportion of students live at home. You can study for your law degree in the evening, but not for your medicine degree. The university integrates itself into the community, using the city and its life

and work to teach the students. I asked him how the young people feel about the war. He said they had had twenty years of pacifism based on the aftermath of the last war—and they were inclined to be cynical. One of the hardest tasks of his life, he said, was when he had to address them after Pearl Harbour, but there was not a murmur of reproach. They've accepted the war: there's no glory in it for them, no flag-wagging; they look on it as a beastly job that has to be done, and they're doing it. I said this attitude was broadly true of our people also. He said their young people really felt the war needn't have happened, had we all possessed more vision and common sense.

We have recently exchanged four working-men with U.S.A. to tour the factories. How long it takes combined governments to move! It was in 1941 that the British first made this suggestion. We need many more similar tourists. One American workman who tells his comrades what Britain has done is worth a ton of pamphlets. We could do with a small army of workmen crossing the Atlantic both ways.

An Archbishop in Detroit recently took exception privately to the wording of the Teheran communiqués in which Russia was spoken of as a democracy. That was sound enough, but I fear the Catholic attitude towards Russia is one of our stumbling blocks.

The view is often expressed to me that after all we British and Americans are one family, and will pull through our difficulties.

Illustrative of the gaps in our propaganda work, not an American at my lunch table yesterday—about eight advertising men—had seen *Desert Victory*. The man next me asked where he could buy it—thought it was a book!

U.S. red tape can be worse than ours. My permits to visit two factories have not yet arrived. A British official who has visited a certain plant twenty times still has to get a permit each time—and each time it takes a minimum of ten days.

At 5 a.m. to-day my bedroom door was flung open, my light put on, some incomprehensibilities muttered, my door shut and locked. At 8 a.m. it happened again. I think they object to my leaving the door unlocked.



An American editor has the brain-wave that Germany post-war should be prohibited from manufacturing anything on wheels or tracks and that all her motor-cars should be made in Detroit! Oh, boy! says Detroit.

January 16th, 1944.

As one moves about Detroit one hears fantastic and fabulous things about life and people here—some true, some doubtless invention. Wealth constitutes almost royalty. The Ford fortune is now put at 625 millions, held mostly by the family; no shareholders to worry about. I'll set down some points my informant made—he agreed they sounded like *The Arabian Nights*. A man put 5,000 dollars into Ford's works in its early days. He was bought out ultimately for a good many million dollars. Fortunes amounting to scores of millions of dollars have been made by Ford for others living here. A friend sat down to dinner one night with thirteen people worth 275 million dollars, five of those present being widows!

A few of these folk have leapt from being mechanics to being millionaires within twenty to forty years. Two such men whose early joy was to smash up a drinking bar and then send a cheque for 5,000 dollars as compensation decided to start steam-yachting; they built the largest yacht on the Lakes, and had piece of the Lake dredged to accommodate it inshore. In describing certain Detroit houses, he spoke of a dining-room floored with glass, zebra skins on the walls, soup plates each of cut glass topped by blue lids, garage doors which swing open, operated by a ray when you approach. For breakfast one morning he was one of three or four people for whom four dozen eggs were cooked in every conceivable fashion on the off-chance that one sort or other might tempt you—eggs borne in by Negro maids. Negro maids served at breakfast, white maids at dinner. But one needn't go on. Imagination can do the rest. Women bejewelled in manner Pharaoh's daughters hardly excelled—one woman shining with diamonds and emeralds from wrist almost to elbow. I'm told the minds of many of these folk are set in the Fascist mould; it would not be surprising if they were.

Yet, despite all this, they have delivered the goods. In this war their efficient works are playing a main part in saving the world.

I drove out yesterday afternoon to glance at Ford's Willow Run works, where the mighty B.24 bombers are built. The

output is several hundred a month, and, say their officials, fast nearing a new peak. If you stand at a high window in Detroit you can see miles of factories and tall, thin chimneys. Ford's old works from a mile or two away are much as one would imagine—a dirty huddle of plant and chimneys with square miles of sidings and trucks and puffing engines. All over the place new excavations seem to be in progress. It might be a glorified Sheffield or Wolverhampton. Then you learn that *the excavations are part of the new road being built from this works to the Willow Run works, twenty miles off, an "express way."* Along part of this we drove, but as we did so I saw on the left some small, low detached buildings rather like cardboard boxes dotted over bare clay or sand. We got out and knocked at a door and asked if we might look inside. A young woman invited us in who said she came from Tennessee (some 300 miles distant). The bungalow was warm and cosy enough—a big stove in the middle which burns coal. Coal is the only utility she buys, the remainder—light, water—are included in the rent of 5 dollars a week. This house had two bedrooms—an extra bedroom costs another 2 dollars a week. Her husband, who works a night-shift of eight hours, draws 65 dollars a week. (This is a little more than the average individual wage for the city, but the average *household* income is put at just under 100 dollars a week. There are individual workers earning 180 dollars, though this is rare. There's a factory at Muskegon where, on a Sunday, men have earned 80 dollars in that one day, but the rate-fixing was faulty and is being remedied.) This 65-dollar husband and wife run a car in which she shops; there's a small field of ice for children to play on, and an indoor playground also. But the general surroundings are appallingly drab, a waste of bare land like an army encampment. Near Willow Run we came upon a lot of various types of wooden *houses run-up—white houses, log-cabins, 400-dollar houses, and even shacks built in copses or woods from odds and ends. "Squatters,"* my companion called the latter. Men have moved from the South, trailing their belongings and have run up a dwelling here and there. God knows what happens to sanitation. However, there's plenty of wind and land. Here again is the American story—men getting rich in one lifetime. A Nazi came here in 1936; to-day he himself employs 150 men and is a sub-contractor to Ford's. (America has much that's Germanic about it. The brass and glass doors of General Motors' building might be in Berlin. So might the Gothic, highly-coloured tiled arches in the roof—a touch of Byzantium in

them, Byzantium Hollywood.) But of course—not all Ford's workers are so adventurously provided for as the "hill-billies." Thousands come in motor-cars—I watched the four o'clock shift rolling up. Viewed from an eminence, the cars were as an army of beetles on the ground.

Twenty months ago Willow Run was no more than woods and fields. Notices "No hunting—Defence area" are still stuck up round the outskirts. My companion spoke of work being done to persuade managements to set up labour management committees of masters and men to ensure that labour is used in the best fashion. What happens now is that complaints are occasionally made that there's not enough man-power at a time when some labour in certain works is idle. Ford's have no such committee. Many of the truly big combines dislike the notion; labour is there to do what it is told—that is their view. You feel you are stepping back into yesterday in coming to America so far as labour and management go. My companion said: "It is sometimes difficult for Government officials even to enter the works. Sometimes such a man is refused admission." I wonder how much is red tape? Our Embassy in Washington asked permission for me to visit the Ford and Chrysler works. No such permission has yet been granted. I'm unofficially told they don't like writers—officially, that the plants are not "open to the public." This refusal would not happen in England to an American writer. Apart from the principle, it is no great matter. I shall see all I want to see elsewhere, no doubt. But inequalities between our two countries are unfortunate—they don't help good relationships.

One or two fighter aircraft were up in the sky—a patrol over the works. This patrol in the centre of a continent strikes an Englishman as precaution gone mad, but my companion said: "There are great regions in Canada where a foreign army could assemble unseen and thence bomb these works." How extravagant that sounds! But he was serious. A lot of Americans have the apprehensive mentality we in London had pre-war when we thought the first air raid would blot London out. A few Liberators flew round—aircraft which Willow Run makes. He said: "At times you can see them rising, one every five minutes." Ford is credited with saying in the beginning that he could make a bomber a minute: he hasn't reached that yet. Near a works gate, a uniformed man carrying a revolver strolled over to see what we wanted; a very pleasant fellow. As we drove on, my companion talked of Ford—a man who suffers, he said, from claustrophobia; a man also with what he called

a death-like grip—achieving a great fortune by sticking to manufacturing a buggy when his competitors strove after something better.

This was a beautiful day, like an English October afternoon; sun brilliant and at times warm. (A policeman tells me this is unique in his lifetime.) Miles upon miles of flat land rather like north Norfolk—brown, dry. Ford wanted elbow room. He's got it. We drove past Greenwich Village, where he's collected a vast museum of houses and what-not—here's the very house Thomas Edison was born in, and other houses brought even from across the seas. From time to time during our run we drove under two other roads—a three-level crossing, or past a building, new, into which daylight never enters—the argument being that such a building is easier to light and air-condition precisely as is wanted if *everything* is artificial.

We drove through part of "Down Town" on the way back. Cobbles, tramway cars, humble shops (some empty), a sign "Beer—Liquor—Lunches"—some frankness there! There were miles upon miles of it that might have been a variation of Rochdale or Clydebank. Occasionally we saw a workman sporting a red plaid jacket and cap of thick wool—his hunting kit. In the Fall the workmen ride off in their motor-cars to hunt deer—the graph of absenteeism in workshops rises owing to that fact, as it rises round about the Fourth of July. (Absenteeism in an aircraft-engine factory I visited later totals 6·7 per cent., the female percentage being 8·3, and the male 5·6. The worst days are Saturday and Monday, the best day is pay-day—Thursday or Friday.)

We picked up two American soldiers, both privates. My companion asked them, "Where are you going, sir?" as respectfully as if they had been Generals. This is the customary address to strangers: "How are you, sir?"—and charming it is.

*January 16th, 1944.*

Dined at a golf club twelve miles out. Lounges the size of ballrooms. Entrance fee 1,500 dollars, and subscription 220 dollars a year. Did a little crap-shooting (dicing), at which I was a woeful failure. Over supper an English wing-commander talked of the Battle of Britain. For a week at a time he never left dispersal point. Forty times a day the telephone would ring and the airman would yell, "Scramble!"—in which case they would be in the air in two minutes; or the telephonist wouldn't use that cry—in which case the pilots lying on their

beds, exhausted, but dressed in the Mae Wests, etc., would relax again. Every time the bell rang the men's heads rose from their pillows, anxious, alert, taut as fiddle strings. They were on duty from 3.30 a.m. till 10.30 at night. Men became so exhausted that they had to be lifted from their cockpits, carried to beds, and fed with coffee or other stimulants; and in forty-five minutes they were going up again. He spoke with some grimness, as well he might, a man frank and without nonsense. What have most of us done compared with what these men—or boys—have done? He has done over 300 sorties against the enemy and had seventy-four scraps—flew for two years operational without a break. He thinks there should be an Air Force medal, not for himself, for he has several decorations, but for others; one of his men has had six aircraft shot from under him and has nothing to show for it. He thinks, too, there should be a training medal for those who've taught men to fly. The *flak* over France has now become infinitely worse; it's the most trying thing to face—you feel it's like an octopus, you dodge it here and it reaches for you there—only by knowing the coast of France and the *flak* lanes and the artillery posts like his own hand has he escaped. But he thinks survival is 90 per cent. luck, anyhow. In his view, there's little difference between a man who's decorated and one who's frightened. "You get frightened so often you get used to it. I wait for the other fellow to make a mistake—they always make it." He thinks our fighter pilots to-day are better than the enemy. He once flew through *flak* for forty-five unbroken minutes.

He's a dapper little man, twenty-seven, grey-eyed, neat in movements, precise; knows his own mind, minds nothing. Loves playing crap—"Sometimes I've played all night, ten p.m. to six next morning. Once I lost a hundred quid in one sitting." Thinks, as I do, it's a pity for a pilot to marry. "I've known ten cases where a pilot has been shot down the day before he was to be married or the week before his wife was due to have a baby. So now, if a baby is to be born, I send him on leave a week beforehand. But I won't have wives within fifty miles of the flying field." By the way, he said that in the Battle of Britain you got beyond fear, you became no more than part of the machine, beyond any feeling at all. He thinks if Jerry had stuck at us another fortnight we should have been finished. But who can say?

Detroit journalists have a guild "to guarantee constant honesty in the news and to raise the standard of journalism and

ethics in the industry." They've just issued a white paper on the last mayoral elections in Detroit wherein they charge all three papers with refusing to publish advertisements for the mayor's opponent and with tucking news away they didn't like. Newspapers everywhere—not only in U.S.A.—do this sort of thing to greater or less degree.

A Labour leader here said to me that he favours a tax on newspaper advertisement revenue so that the public may know where papers draw their money from. "Take Standard Oil," he said. "They don't need to advertise to sell their products, but they *do* advertise and thus they bring pressure to bear on the newspaper. I used to be a printer. I remember setting up a news column attacking a firm of stores. But it never appeared. The advertisement director walked over to the stores and, using that column as a weapon, forced them to advertise with the paper."

A. J. Balfour was once taken to the top of a skyscraper. His companion said, "Mr. Balfour, sixty-eight stories and all fire-proof!" Mr. Balfour inquired: "Why?"

Another crack: "A Civil Servant is a man who marries a prostitute and drags her down to his own level."

Examples of our Government's meanness in money continue to reach me. Years spent as Acting Consul-General do not qualify for pension in that grade, yet the burden may be very heavy while so acting.

*January 17th, 1944.*

Spent this morning at an air-engine factory run by General Motors.

Within the entrance were lined up about thirty spotless motor-cars; I thought them brand new, but no, merely the cars of executives, each in its appointed place.

My impression that Americans are stickier than we are was confirmed. Nobody dared tell me what the average wage in this factory is. I had to pay a special visit later in the day to the Vice-President to find out. It was worth doing. On his office wall is a sign in red: "We're at war!" I had been warned that he was tough. Perhaps he is, but we got along quite well. There's no piece-work in their factories—the unions won't have it, he said. In his view, output would rise 25 per cent. at once if they did have it. There's a clause in union rules agreed

by Washington that after ninety days any newcomer to the factory must draw the rate for the job, so that the "Hill Billies" and the "Shoeless Wonders" from the wilds of Michigan or the Deep South draw, after ninety days, the same pay as men who've done the job for fifteen years. The old-timers take a poor view of this. These "Hill Billies" make about 62 dollars a week; a skilled tool-maker makes about 100 dollars, and if he works a week of sixty hours (this is rare) he might make 180 dollars. A girl from behind a soda-fountain who goes in to sweep round draws 89 cents an hour. He thought in general that their workpeople get twice as much as ours. It's difficult to compare because, as I've said earlier, a dollar buys much less than 5s. buys in England. He said that a suit of clothes costs him 100 dollars; mine costs me in England 50 dollars. But at all events, American workmen have a lot of money left after paying their way, so much so that within the next few months the staff and workers in General Motors will have bought a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of War Bonds.

I said: "Yours strikes me as a wild country in some ways."

He said: "Yes. One reason is that this country is so big. If you in England have a problem, you can't get away from it—you're on top of it, whatever you do. You're no bigger than Michigan. But if people get into a mess here they can run away—run off to the west coast, 2,000 miles away."

He was a well-made, heavy man, wearing fine clothes and a white shirt. The white shirts and collars of American men are much finer than ours; most of them change their shirt every day. The men look heavier, better-fed. I had said this earlier to two "counsellors" in the works, two young men of thirty-odd who see everybody who wants to quit the job; they find out why. I added: "Yours is in some respects a magnificent but wasteful country, obsessed with money, vast, corrupt, and so swift that if you were a bit slower you'd be more efficient." I said it with a smile half-seriously and they agreed, but maybe they were just being polite.

To return to the Vice-President. I asked him if they are going to get along with the trade unions. He thought so—he thinks we've got the same problems on both sides of the Atlantic, all save the Negro problem. He, like the trade unions, doesn't approve Mr. Roosevelt's notion of a National Service Act. It might have been all right when the war started—too late to do it now, when curtailments of production are beginning. We talked of Mr. Churchill. He said: "I admire him—we all do. Friends say to me, 'He comes over and twists Roosevelt round

his finger.' I say, 'I know—that's what he's sent over to do.' Some of us have records of all the speeches he's made over here." I said: "Do you think we're going Red? Are you afraid of that?" He said, "No, of course you're not going Red—only a fool would think that. Your Conservatives are too steady an influence."

The two "counsellors" earlier on, when I had said we in England are not so violent as Americans in public denunciations, asked: "What about those orators in London"—they meant Marble Arch orators, took them rather seriously. I said: "They're a public entertainment."

Over lunch in the works—an admirable lunch which cost only 50 cents—my host unfolded why some folk don't like us. He said: "Do you want both barrels?" I said: "Surely." He said: "Well, we hear you say you're the highest-taxed nation in the world. How can you be when you draw all those taxes from your Dominions and Colonies?" I said: "We don't draw a darned ha'penny." He said, "Well, we think you do, because we broke away from you over taxes ourselves. Then—you've been getting other people to fight your wars for you all down the centuries—that's what your enemies say, and a lot believe it." So I told him our casualties are twelve times America's in this war relative to our respective populations. "Tell me," he said, "are Englishmen haughty? Are you superior? We know you are the best diplomats in the world, always able to beat everybody else." He conceded that the Englishmen he's met are decent, easy to get along with, I said: "We've a few who are arrogant and stupid and a damned nuisance, doing us damage wherever they go—but they're a diminishing quantity. And you've got a few who don't do *your* country any good, either."

We walked round the factory. The girls were the handsomest and best turned-out factory girls I've ever seen; blue overalls, blue "mob" caps, faces delicately made-up. Some are high school or college girls who've volunteered to do this because their brothers are in the Army or Navy. One sends her Army brother 10 dollars a week. My guide called them "home girls." Others are housewives. I talked with one of the latter, a middle-aged woman who looks after a six-roomed flat and makes up three lunches before she leaves home. She has never worked in a factory before; likes it; makes 52 dollars a week. Some girls of eighteen make 55 or 56 dollars (if you turn that into English money, it's £14 a week, and if you halve the worth of the dollar it's still £7). Their foreman spoke of them with pride,



as foremen do of women in England. "On those milling machines they can take the men to town, take the tails off 'em. We've had to take women off some heavier jobs—they cried when we did it."

This part of the factory begins at 7 a.m. and the women work, with a break of only twenty minutes for lunch, till 3 p.m., when their workday ends. The machines don't stop—three eight-hour shifts are worked. There's little or no overtime. General Motors occasionally works a department fifty-four hours if the urgency requires it, and tool-makers occasionally work six shifts of ten hours; but overtime is not highly regarded. I asked several girls how they liked the twenty minutes' break and finishing at 3 p.m. They said: "O.K.—don't want it changed." Not all use the canteen—several bring a sandwich and an orange. The first lunch in the canteen is served at 11 a.m.

I talked with a middle-aged woman in the works police—a woman as immaculate as a shopwalker. Her task is to watch for quarrels and stop them before they start. Occasionally there's a little trouble between black girls and white—trouble over use of lavatories perhaps; but usually she can blow the storm away (she said) before it develops.

An absentee workman has his name posted up. After two warnings, he can be suspended for six days; suspension is rare.

I asked several officials what proportion of workers are slackers with no heart in the war and no incentive beyond the pay envelope. Estimates varied from 5 per cent. to 15 per cent. One reply: "If I could remove even one per cent., all trouble would cease." Another: "The 'Hill Billies' and 'Shoeless Wonders' are earning more money than they ever dreamed of. After a while, they think: 'Why work hard? We've got enough!'"

*January 18th, 1944.*

I said to an Englishman that I may get restive over not being in at the beginning of the Second Front. He replied; "This is a battleground, too, you know."

Detroit, if not the greatest manufacturing centre in the world, is probably the richest. Figures in the *Board of Commerce Journal* are illuminating. The city has 1,875,000 people of whom 770,000 are working in the war factories. The average wage

is 61.15 dollars a week, an increase of nearly 30 dollars over 1937. The average household income is 100 dollars a week, or 5,000 dollars a year. Before the war the household income was only about 1,537 dollars; the rise is caused, in part, by more people in the households working. The cost of living rise is put at 18.5 per cent.

Detroit's industrial output averages in value one billion dollars a month—three times the figure of 1937, which was the nation's best peacetime year. Total bank deposits are also nearly three times those of 1937, and bank savings deposits are up 94 per cent. on that year.

Figures of this sort can mean little to you or me; they are somewhat stunning. One hears more picturesque items, though whether they are 100 per cent. true, I doubt. For example, that Negresses are paying 100 dollars cash down for fancy powder bags. Certainly, some are earning between 50 and 60 dollars a week; in all, 13,000 Negresses now work in war plants. Again: that large sums are being spent on cheap whisky and gin; that coloured folk now buy goods lavishly. But it is also true that housing conditions can be appalling. The Police Commissioner tells me that in some houses where three families formerly lived, eight families now live. The city proper has swollen by 250,000 people during the war and what's called the tri-county area, fifty miles afield, by 550,000—almost as if the whole city of St. Louis had been dumped here. Nobody knows how many of the newcomers are Negroes. Louis Martin, Editor of the *Michigan Chronicle*, a Negro newspaper, told me he put it at 18,000 increase in the city, and maybe 35,000 to 50,000 in the larger area. The Board of Commerce puts Negroes at 10 per cent. of the total increase. We do know, however, that while the blacks in Detroit were 40,000 in 1920, they were 120,000 in 1930 and 150,000 in 1940.

The greater influx is of whites—many of them "poor whites" from Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama (where the incoming blacks also come from) and from the outlying lands of Michigan, where they've scratched a bare living from the woodland and indifferent soil they chanced to live on. Some are already drifting back whence they came, having saved enough to keep them for a while—for 100 dollars can be that sufficient sum.

Their coming was one cause, at all events, of the Detroit riots. There are broadly two sets of laws for Negroes in America (though individual states break that down still further). South

of the Mason-Dixon Line—the River Ohio forms much of it—what's called Jim Crowism exists: blacks and whites are segregated on public vehicles, in schools, etc., and usually blacks have no vote. As Louis Martin said to me: "Blacks must fly or walk if they don't want to be discriminated against—they can't *ride*." In the North, conditions are better, though complete equality is, as a rule, far off. At all events, Negroes coming North find new liberties—which they do not always accept with restraint; whites coming North find blacks invested with liberties they, the whites, have never granted them in the South—and the whites wax indignant. Neither side is immaculate. Blacks grow a trifle aggressive, spurred on by the Four Freedoms. Whites are intolerant. The *Jackson, Mississippi, Daily News* wrote last June: "It is blood on your hands, Mrs. Roosevelt. More than any other person you are morally responsible for those race riots in Detroit. . . . You have been personally proclaiming and practising social equality at the White House and wherever you go, Mrs. Roosevelt." Langston Hughes, the Negro poet, has written:

*Looky here, America . . .*

and, later in the poem:

*You Jim Crowed me  
Before Hitler rose to power—  
And you're still Jim Crowing me  
Right now, this very hour.*

*Yet you say we're fighting  
For democracy,  
Then why don't democracy  
Include me?*

Blacks and whites work together in Detroit factories to a degree unknown hitherto; some clashes are inevitable. A housing estate is built—and a controversy occurs over who is to live there. But I think there's more than this to it, too. I've noted already those who say that Detroit is the home of American Fascism. Big Business is rarely liberal-minded. Moreover, ambitious evangelists and men called "rabble-rousers" have come to the city; some of them work in factories—one estimate says Detroit has 2,500 part-time gospel preachers, among them those who are fundamentalists and those who are anti-liberal, anti-union,

anti-British, anti-Jew, anti-Negro. "America's industrial Fifth Column" is a phrase that trade unionists have used.

A high police official said to me that Detroit is still sitting on a powder magazine. A riot squad exists ready to tackle any new outbreak. Nobody knows if it will come. They anticipated the last riot—but it took the military twenty-four hours to move, whereas they had said they could move fast; unexpected red tape operated.

When I asked the Police Commissioner, Mr. Bellenger, how many nationalities live in Detroit, he replied with a smile: "We've got all there are." Mr. Bellenger was formerly in charge of social welfare, and is a broad-minded man. He was just sitting off in a car with a Negress, a cultured woman holding a degree; they were both to speak at a meeting. He said: "Not everybody in my department would agree with my action."

Among the diverse nationalities of Detroit, British and Canadian are the largest number—110,000 of them. Detroit is the only U.S.A. city of which this is true. These British (an expert on population said to me) give the town a balance. They're conservative, he said, not to be organised into any political machine, want clean government and are the biggest element in getting it. He added: "We're the best-governed city in America for its size."

Both employers and unions speak with admiration of our labour relations in Britain—feel they in America are learning the hard way. Mr. Harvey Campbell, executive Vice-President of the Detroit Board of Commerce, writing in their weekly journal on November 29th, 1943, says: "Don't get panicky about the passing phase of labour terrorism. Remember that Chicago survived Haywood, Goldman, Debs—even Capone. Detroit's greatness cannot be deterred by delinquents, adult or juvenile." On December 6th, 1943, he wrote: "Three things threaten Detroit's payrolls: (1) Predatory unionism, (2) Sneak punch politics, (3) Below the belt journalism."

I spent an hour with him and his assistants this afternoon. Mr. Campbell is the heavily-built, well-dressed executive I am growing accustomed to. He talked of reversion back to peacetime production—thinks there'll be an awkward six months while private industry fights the Government to get the Government machinery out of factories and the normal machinery and assembly lines back; the Government will be slow, and red tape will do its hindering. (He spoke picturesquely of normal machinery lying to-day outside under tarpaulins,

getting greased now and then.) After that initial six months will follow ten years of terrific prosperity—and after that he fears a most unholy depression. He holds the view I have met before, that our business men have outdone them—in South America, for instance, where, he said, Henry Wallace, their Vice-President, has talked of American imperialism and thrown South America into our English lap. Our British Government and British business, in his view, work together, move together. "I'm not blaming you—I wish we could do the same." We were smarter at foreign trade than they are—naturally, he said, since we British depend on it, whereas America's is only 15 per cent. of her output. Americans are afraid, he said, that while America is still fighting Japan, we British will be manufacturing for peace and capturing markets in Germany and elsewhere. "After all," he said, "you've got more ball-bearing machinery now than you ever had." I told him that if we acted thus, I, as a writer and onlooker, would think it rather reprehensible—and I didn't believe we should do it. We shall, I said, in my view, use our resources to the full helping to fight Japan. But he shook his head as if to say—Business is business.

We talked of Negroes. He said the coloured people are the easiest in the world to get along with till somebody starts stirring them up. One of his assistants commented: "The blacks say, 'We eat and sleep and don't worry about nothing. You whites—you gets in a mess, goes to bed, worries, don't sleep—then you commits suicide. Blacks *never* commit suicide.'"

Another told the story: "In the South a white man's wife worried him to cut the lawn. A black came by. The white said: 'Here, nigger, you like to earn two bits?' The Negro put his hand in his pocket, pulled out two coins: 'No, *sir*. I *got* two bits.'"

And again: "A white was urging a black to work—"You work, see, then you'll be able to sit back—live, and *do no work at all*." The black grinned. 'What's the good? Why, I ain't workin' *now*.'"

I asked Mr. Louis Martin, the Negro journalist, if he approved of black-white marriages. He said it was a matter for the individual—after all, thousands of black women had been raped by whites. One fourth of Negroes, he said, are part white, are fair people. His wife is so fair that you can't tell, he said, that she is not white. He himself, as I saw, is part white. He smiled ironically: "We didn't get this way by peroxide." I asked if he thought Jefferson simply did not think of Negroes when writing the Declaration of Independence, saying all men are born equal. He replied that Jefferson had several specific clauses dealing

with the subject, but the South objected and a compromise was made. He believes the newcomer Negroes will stay in Detroit after the war and that if, when sackings begin, discrimination is made on account of colour, there'll be serious trouble. There's no solution, in his view, except equality on the basis of the Four Freedoms. He made an interesting point—that the crime records show that the Negroes punished after the Detroit riots were Detroit Negroes, not the newcomers.

The Detroit factory I went through has shown *Desert Victory* with great success, and is now to show Capra's *Battle of Russia*.

Detroit police force has in its ranks as many Poles as Irish—perhaps more. Two important police officers are named Siska and Wysocki.

Catholics are 48 per cent. of Detroit's people. A Canadian who addressed them said to me they look on us British as the great bulwark against Communism.

January 20th, 1944.

I am now living in the Chicago Club, which is most comfortable. Food is luxurious—eighteen egg dishes at breakfast and twenty other dishes more solid. I wish I could do them more justice. The only drawback is that street cars outside run about twenty hours out of twenty-four. I've seen thus far only glimpses of this city which Chicago folk firmly believe the finest in U.S.A., and therefore the finest in the world. As I drove home last night the tall skyscrapers shone in the night like jewelled towers, the old slender brown watertower was flood-lit, far beyond the river a conical building sparkled in blue and red, and streets flickered with coloured lights. The night was calm but brilliant. My companions, a farmer and his wife, who were setting off to drive home thirty-three miles, said the city was not half so well-lit as in peacetime.

We had been attending a dinner given by the Consul-General, Mr. Gallienne. Those who came were bankers, lawyers, ship-builders, professors, physicians, judges, university presidents and so forth. We had a buffet meal, Miss Freya Stark and I spoke briefly, and afterwards stories were told, and we sang. We sang, among other songs, *A Wee Doch an' Doris* and *On Ilkla Moor baht Hat*. A leading business man told me at length how the business community has no confidence in Roosevelt and—"when we've no confidence in a man, he's out—finished—we never recover confidence once lost." A farmer said the land

badly needed snow—the soil is awfully dry and “getting ready to blow.”

A director of a department store said to me he's impressed by the fact that nobody can live alone in this world, and that he's never been nearer voting for Roosevelt.

The English-Speaking Union president had given a lunch for me earlier to meet a number of prominent business men. One said it was unfortunate that you could now buy British woollen socks in stores here when you can't buy American ones—makes folk think we are already “beating the Americans.” They were unanimous that our business men, so far as international trade goes, are smarter than America's, and our diplomats, too. The gospel of the Five Senators is deeply ingrained. I told them how my native Lancashire has been put on the dole in part by India raising her tariffs against our cotton goods. This was new to them.

One said on parting: “This city has sixty-one nationalities—it's the largest Polish city in the world outside Warsaw. Worth remembering. We are no longer Anglo-Saxon.”

Of business men I've met in America so far I should say two and two only are liberal in mind. Many of our Tories are liberal compared with the bulk of them. It's a fact we've got to face.

*January 21st, 1944.*

This view was confirmed to-day by one who knows America well. He said: “The opposite number of an English Tory could be said, without much exaggeration, to be here a Fascist, and the opposite of an English Socialist, a Communist. America has little in between. A cynic might well say that when Fascism has been stamped out in the rest of the world, it will still reign to some extent here.”

He thinks the old isolationism dead, but said other things far from agreeable might take its place. He didn't know, however, where America is to find the educated and skilled young men to run her bases, etc., overseas—argued that young America has been stay-at-home so long that there'll have to be a new orientation in the country's outlook if this overseas job is going to be done. I said that surely out of Americans now fighting overseas enough will want to stay abroad to do the work. He doubted it.

I spoke of divorce. He said that a large proportion of those he knows have been married twice. “There's no religious basis to marriage as often as not—it is a mere love affair. Girls commonly marry at eighteen, boys at twenty-one or twenty-two.

By twenty-five many girls are divorced." (Early marriages, it seems to me, may be a very good thing.)

He went on: "An American historian said to me last night that the Civil War was destructive to this country—it destroyed such an enormous number of Anglo-Saxon stock. They've been irreplaceable."

I drove six miles along the water-front this morning. Lake Michigan was like a sea, pale green and grey, partly frozen, hung with a light mist. This water-front is superb. The lake stretches sixty to eighty miles across; outwards, I didn't see a ship, but returning saw two or three in the far distance. My English friend was depressed. He said he came to this country hopeful and thinking the best, but as days and weeks go by, begins to feel more and more deeply that everything here is materialistic, that too many have no notion whatever of truth for its own sake; that these are essentially not irreligious but a-religious. He said: "I think there is good raw material here, but who will mould it?" I said that if America suffered as we have suffered in this war—got as near to the brink and found out what matters in life and what does not, it would do her good. He said: "Yes, one of America's statesmen said that to me." He murmured a wise thing—that the only propaganda that's any good is that which gives a little pain when administered. Telling people only the agreeable is pretty useless.

He said: "In many ways this country is eighty years behind the times"—he thought that, on the whole, the newspaper men are the best Americans and better newspaper men than many of our own.

In the afternoon I ran down to Hull House, a place founded by Jane Adams and having kinship with Toynbee Hall. It lies in what resembles London's East End. Here I met Mr. Ballard, who at one time taught in a school fifteen miles out—a school that had twenty-seven nationalities, including Negroes. (He said, by the way, that he found nothing to choose between one race and another—none seemed more intelligent than another, and certainly the Negroes were not below the rest.) In this neighbourhood, once occupied largely by Italians and Greeks, Mexicans and Negroes have now taken the place of the Italians, who have moved farther out. We walked round Maxwell Street neighbourhood; here are hideous slums, among them wooden "frame" houses, rickety, and resembling overgrown hen-coops. Nearby are street-markets, the Petticoat Lane of Chicago,



indistinguishable from ours except that here black is as prevalent as white. I saw something further of Chicago's bad housing in company with Mr. Leonard Rieser, a liberal-minded Jewish lawyer—also with us, an official of the local housing authority. We visited a building ironically named Mecca House, where 400 families of Negroes live in a rectangular building of several floors which resembles in shape a swimming bath or a prison—the whole centre is empty. The squalor and odour were both considerable. People are herded together—on a door lintel would be nailed a scrap of paper with the information, “1 ring for Mrs. Black, 2 for Mrs. Green, 3 for Mrs. Brown, 4 for Mr. White, 5 for Miss Purple.” Chicago has some 350,000 houses below standard, and the housing authority has built 7,000 new houses or tenements in a beginning of the attempt to cope with the problem. To this activity of a public authority, the private enterprise real estate gentlemen are opposed—which is, and is not, surprising. We climbed into one or two other small dwellings which rival Mecca House—dark, filthy, and as bad, but doubtless no worse, than many in Britain. What work remains to be done! For these blots on the landscape these poor folk are paying as high rents—indeed, often higher—than for the new flats municipally built. I saw a few of these last, built close to the abominations they have replaced. The kitchens have their ice-boxes, their stoves and cookers, and are centrally heated; some have but one bedroom, some have three, and their rents are governed by the earnings of those who live in them—the rent may thus vary from 15 dollars a month to 35 dollars for precisely the same accommodation. The better-off tenants growl a bit at the benefits conferred on others, but when the reasons are rightly explained, they accept it pretty cheerfully. In some of the housing estates nationalities are mixed, indeed—as many as thirty-three sorts. (Classes in English are held in the recreation room.) By and large, they rub along quite well. The young people are the more troublesome—when Italy was doing well in this war, the young Italians gave the Jews a bad time. Again, at a school 80 per cent. Negro, white children have sometimes suffered. As a rule, however, the Negroes like to live in their own circle; they segregate themselves. As time has gone on, the policy has been tried of deliberately mixing races, and with success. The phrase was used to me: “We are in an evolutionary period.” But problems remain, and there's a sense in which tension between blacks and whites does not diminish, but increases. The war has seen to that. Again, there is caste among the Negroes themselves—those who live north of

a certain street are thought inferior to the rest. Chicago had 300,000 Negroes pre-war and a further 50,000 have come to the city since.

I had some talk later in the day with Mr. Edwin Embree and one or two others of the Rosenwald Foundation, which gives fellowships to Negroes. At its close I asked whether in their view the Negro will ever achieve complete equality and if so, when—adding that I knew it was a difficult question. One of our group, an anthropologist, said he estimated the time required would be 350 years—by then we should all of us have some Negro blood in our veins and discrimination would no longer be desired or make sense. Somebody else said by that time, or long before, we whites would be in pens like the Red Indians—objects of curiosity. Mr. Rieser said the Negro would not be content to wait 350 years—he was moving fast. Earlier, Mr. Embree had said that for every move forward the Negro makes, his vision goes far beyond, and his demands outstrip more and more whatever gains he makes. Mr. Embree was not deprecating this; my impression was he thought it a good thing. He spoke of the explosive situation that exists, and said that further riots in Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York cannot be ruled out as possibilities; nor did he think that a riot was the worst thing that can happen. Naturally, neither he nor anybody else desires them, but you might have a riot, he said, combined with progress, and, on the other hand, you could have continued outward peace, and with it stultification.

The remark was made that only 57 per cent. of America's population is native-born of native-born parents, which led to Mr. Embree saying: "Negroes could say, 'We are the old America.'" Good employment and good housing are the Negroes' main needs. Next month, Chicago is to hold a conference on these racial problems—seventy-five officials will meet seventy-five citizens, among them men of the various races. No other city has yet taken this step.

To-day I saw two British short films—*Listen to Britain* and *The Silent Village*. The first, seen here in this foreign land, I found at times deeply moving. We British are a closely-integrated nation compared with America. The picture could have ranged even wider than it does to capture Britain's life, but there were moments—as, for example, when a lot of children in an elementary school playground are dancing—when the sight of those thin, small legs and wind-blown flaxen heads and dumpty little faces, so frank, so English, made me homesick.

Oddly enough, the R.A.F. lads and others dancing in Blackpool ballroom and singing "Roll out the barrel" was moving also. But it's a hard job succeeding with a picture as quiet and sincere as this in this febrile and noisy country. *The Silent Village* is finely done, too, but it has its own difficulties that are not overcome—my imagination could not quite accept this Welsh village as Lidice. That's a failing in me, no doubt.

Chicago has its own Broadway, theatres and cinemas flashing and winking their extravagant lights—the apothecosis of the old-time fair-ground, with naphtha flares and blaring steam-organs. The word "burlesque" is used here to describe the lowest vaudeville houses, where mixed shows alternate film with strip-tease girls. We spent half an hour in one. On the back seat a worn-out human was asleep. He was an admirable judge. These shows go on the best part of the day, and why the girls don't go mad from boredom I don't know. If anybody walks in, in the hope that he'll be excited by the girls' charms, he will be bitterly disillusioned—unless, that is, he's drunk.

*January 22nd, 1944.*

Last night I dined at the Faculty Club, Chicago University. Names of some present will suggest how mixed is this nation and what a miracle of melting down has been done; and also how hopeful it is for the world that this diversity of men can be good friends. This was one of my happiest evenings since I came to America. Thus there sat with me Ulrich Middeldorf (art), Professor Schultz (agriculture), A. C. Sectorsky (literary critic), Benedict Einarson (professor of Greek), Eric Mist (bio-chemist), Jo Schwab (professor of biology), Milton Meyer (writer and conscientious objector). My host was William Clark, Civil Servant, whose brother, a Northumberland Fusilier, was in Tobruk round about the time I was.

One of these men has been dismissed from another university for holding that Franco is not much better than Hitler; another has been sacked elsewhere for supporting margarine in a controversy over the nutritive values of margarine and butter. O liberty!

Considerable agreement was expressed to my notion that it is Britain's mission to be mediator between Russia and America; also to my animadversions on the daily Press both here and in Britain. A remark was made that in U.S.A. the radio commentators are infinitely sillier than the Press. A statement was made that I ought not to take much notice of big

business executives since "They are merely foam. Those who count are the inarticulate masses." Again: "The Middle West is uncertain—won't know for years yet where it is going politically." Yet again: "You British are more mature than is America—that's your strength. Develop that strength—make us realise that is what you can contribute to our partnership." (But alas! this strength is what makes the Britain-haters so suspicious.) Another statement was that folk such as barbers are cynical because Congress has opposed re-negotiation of war contracts. A firm with a capital of 100,000 dollars has been made to refund seven million dollars war profits! A story was told me of the head waiter in one of Chicago's swagger restaurants confessing how strong he is for Roosevelt and adding: "We get the biggest laugh out of these swells." (My own taximan said "I voted for Roosevelt the first time, not the second and third times, but I'll vote for him again now. Just think of his guts in crossing the world like he is. And, oh, boy, what a man that Churchill is! Two great men, I'll say!") Further confirmation from Sectorsky of how good the ordinary working-class folk are—he drove pre-war some 11,000 miles across America on about 300 dollars and everybody was "so nice," he says.

A member of the University's administrative staff tells me that a lot of the students now do some work for wages at the same time as they study—they put in, say, twenty hours' work at various jobs in the city. When he was an undergraduate such men were looked down on; now they're looked up to, and those who *don't* work for wages are ill-regarded. This change has taken place within the last ten years, or less.

An R.A.F. fighter ace tells me that when instructing he looped the loop under the Severn Bridge to take the starch out of pupils who were too cocky.

It would be easy to become too pessimistic about the Middle West. It would be simple to record all the attacks on Britain, the baiting of us, the occasional rudeness, and deduce too much from it. We have many good friends here, and it may well be that these or those anxious to be fair are in the majority. The *Chicago Sun*, admirably liberal of mind, offsets to a fair degree the *Chicago Tribune*, though unfortunately it sells only one-third as many. The *Tribune* (Colonel McCormick's paper) can be rabid at our expense. Last September it asserted that we are trying to upset the American Republic and make it part of our Empire. Keynes was the *Englishman*, it added, who rules

America and seduced Roosevelt into the New Deal. In December, McCormick, speaking at Detroit, said that, following the last world war, he assisted the U.S.A. War Department in drawing up plans for the defence of Detroit against attack by the British! The *Tribune's* attacks are pretty regular. It demands transfer of territories to offset Lend-Lease. The other method of damaging us—and few newspapers are altogether free from the abuse—is to ignore our troops and talk only of the Americans. For a week at a time we can be scarcely mentioned. The Middle West, tough, with large numbers of Germans and Poles, has a tendency towards ruthlessness and a love of power for its own sake. Stalin has been admired because of his omnipotence.

I was a guest for lunch at a midday club—about ten bankers, lawyers, physicians, and business men present, men outstanding in Chicago. Only one was of English descent on both sides, and when a banker asked them which war was the more important to them, Germany or Japan, the answer was—Japan! One doctor interposed satirically: "The New Deal." He asked how we in England would answer the same question. I said: "Most of us would reply Germany—the enemy on the doorstep always seems the worst." I asked them, after we had talked for some time, whether we are going to be wise enough to collaborate with Russia after the war. The banker said: "I was always a League of Nations man, and I hope we are going to co-operate in world affairs. But you'd be wise to regard us as a question mark—you can't count on us. You British will have, as I see it, to come to agreement with Russia—you must, if there's going to be peace in Europe. You've got to come to terms with Russia whatever we in America do; but in doing so, keep one eye on us, make your Russian deal as idealistic as you can—and I hope and believe we shall come along with you. But don't keep telling us this is our war in Europe just as much as yours. It is—but it doesn't pay to tell us."

I said: "Don't stay as a question-mark too long—don't put on us too big a burden. We may not be able to carry it. Anyhow, before those final crucial decisions have to be decided, we shall probably have been fighting hard with you in the Pacific and our relations will by then, I hope, be even more cordial than they are now."

A Congressman present said that as soon as the war's over, all their boys will insist on coming home. *They* won't do any policing of the world. I said: "You're wrong, I think. Surely there'll be enough with a spirit of adventure. They'll want to

come home for three weeks—and then they'll be willing to be off again. Our problem in England will be that we shall have thousands of good air pilots who can do no other job. They'll be willing to stay in the R.A.F.—a lot will, anyhow." An American business man said: "Some boys in our Army get better paid now than ever they did. Why shouldn't they stay in the Army? I think they will."

I spoke, to considerable agreement, of the way our British and their American people are treated like children—and the truth withheld from them. I said that our British people are braced by the truth. Most agreed with me, but one man did not, and kept remarking: "You've too much faith in the people. I have no faith. They're like sheep. Only two forms of government are all right—benevolent autocracy or democracy—and we haven't *got* true democracies." I said we've got—we and America—something, at all events, that's better than any other countries have got.

We talked of post-war Germany. Were we going to occupy the country and compel them to do things, or were we going to rely on their achieving their own salvation? I suggested we shall have, in some measure, to do both, but occupying Germany for a century (as one present had proposed) was, in my view, out of the question. We should get bored with the task; after some years, if no further war occurred, we should forget. In the main, the Germans must do their own saving of themselves. Earlier, two or three had argued that we could not have begun to arm earlier than we did, because (a) democracies will never prepare for war, and (b) had we done so, Germany would have struck all the sooner. I contested this, saying (a) democracies will arm if their leaders lead them aright, and that (b) we could hardly have fared in the beginning of any war worse than we did in this, and that the methods we used after the last war were, on the evidence, bad, and we had better try some others. Had we made it plain between the wars that we should fight, we and America, the war would probably not have begun.

There was talk of Britain's strength and Empire, and I said that I sometimes wonder how we shall get along after the war—although in the first post-war years such will be the demand for goods and work that we shall no doubt get our share. The Congressman said that America's resources, too, are getting used up—she will have to go further into the export markets trade, and if she does . . . I gathered the rest of the world will have to look out somewhat. I asked what about all their ships?

A voice said: "Our wage rates are too high for us to become sailors."

I drove away with a wealthy man with whom the President went fishing not very long ago. It was good to find a man of money who has a high regard for Roosevelt. This man worked with him in the last war, when Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary to the Navy. The Secretary at that time was a dull dog and dilatory. They had to wait till he went on a vacation before they could get things done. They would thereupon take a sheaf of documents to his assistant, who was Roosevelt, and whoosh! he would sign the lot and the work would then get done. Roosevelt has done things in this war, too, without waiting for too much authority—such as sending us rifles and 75's after Dunkirk, and sending tanks to El Alamein. I asked if the President shares Winston's fondness for a drink. He said: "When you're alone with him in a small party he mixes his own cocktails, and I'll tell you they're dynamite!" (This lunch had gone on till 5 p.m. We had sat drinking Scotch and talking all that time.)

A manufacturer of radio tells me that captured German aircraft have had fine Dutch radio-sets in them. He cannot forgive the Dutch for collaborating with Germany like that. The Germans, he says, never were good at making radios. But how is this worse than occupied countries making shells and guns?

View of group of business men I met: "We shall go on swinging to the right till the next depression."

I spent an hour in Chicago's chief police station—a building of many stories. The outer office had policemen in plain clothes and trilby hats—like Hollywood says. The detective who saw us was a big man with a big voice—the Albert Hall would present no difficulty to him. He was very agreeable and very frank. I asked him how crime is getting along. He said there is no crime now. (A wealthy woman was shot in the Drake Hotel this week, however.) In the old days, he said, there'd be six or seven dead every morning—and there was nothing you could do about it. You could know who was going to be bumped off—but you couldn't prevent it; and you could know who was next on the list, but you couldn't stop it; and you could know who did the murder, but you couldn't get him. Nobody would give evidence. A man might be shot in the street and a hundred

people might see it. But would any of them say he saw it? He would not. He was afraid that, if he did, his life would be short. So suppose you arrested a man—he wouldn't testify and he wouldn't take the "lie-detector" test. The detective explained this test. You bare a man's arm and fasten the mechanical device to it. This device operates a needle. If you ask the man a question and he lies, the needle jumps. How can you be sure? Well, it hasn't often been wrong. Is the instrument's findings evidence in court? No, it is not. But the murderers wouldn't take the lie-detector test, anyway. He divided those lots of murders into four categories: gang against gang, crimes of passion, coloured murders—I forget the fourth lot. Another problem was that policemen were always getting sued for making wrong arrests. Crooks sued a policeman to deter him from doing his duty. And it *was* a deterrent. The judge would say: "Did you see this man commit the crime?"

"No, your Honour—I had reasonable cause to arrest."

"Did you see him do it?"

"No, your Honour."

"Better get yourself a good lawyer."

And that good lawyer might cost a thousand dollars. Well, if a policeman had two or three of these actions brought against him, he might well begin to go slow, to hesitate to act when he hadn't seen the crime done. (And what chance, one may ask, does a policeman stand of actually seeing a crime?) All the same, they've cleaned up Chicago (he said). Only one gang is working now. About seventy-three have been sent to the penitentiary recently—80 per cent. of 'em black. Black folk—ah! in his view, you can make 'em lawyers and doctors and what-not, but let 'em take a drink and . . . Why, some of them will murder one another over using one another's electric light.

Are policemen armed? I asked. Sure they're armed. He wouldn't do his job five minutes without arms. He took me into an arsenal next door—Tommy guns (Al Capone's weapon, this), shot-guns, rifles, tear-gas bombs, tear-gas rockets to be fired into upper story windows. "This bomb'll put 'em unconscious, but we don't use it, because if you do, the police can't go in for about twenty-four hours." Searchlights? Sure. And armoured jackets. He picked one up weighing 41 lb.—you have to go in and get your men, and if they're armed, then you need armour. You wear two of those jackets—you move slow in them, sure, 82 lb. And you must lean forward—otherwise if a .45 bullet hits you, the impact will knock you over. Hung on the wall were two tall iron shields—you can hook one



on your arm and it covers you—you're a Richard Cœur de Lion over again.

I said I was almost surprised they got anybody to be policemen—were they well paid? No, 92 dollars every two weeks—"but we're O.K. in a depression." Most of the police are Irish. A few are black. The police force can have forty police cars from all over Chicago at any given spot within two and a half minutes—radio does it. And each car has the diversity of weapons I've described.

"Do many Chicago people carry guns?" I asked. He took up a telephone: "How many guns have we taken in this month?" The actual number confiscated was about 172, but it meant, he said, about 500 guns in all this month—pistols, shot-guns, all sorts.

I met a Man about Town to-day who was once a dollar millionaire several times over—hired a yacht at 80,000 dollars for his honeymoon; to-day his wife is a journalist and does the major part in keeping them. They're apparently a couple of philosophers. Who knows, maybe they're happier now. This is a land of opportunities still. A woman farmer I dined with told me they're drilling for oil on their land. If oil is struck—well! There's land in the South wherein they're digging for bauxite. Pre-war you could have bought that land for 20 dollars an acre.

A woman reporter asks me if it's true that American soldiers suffer more from neurasthenia and nervous breakdown than British soldiers; she's heard it is. I said I didn't know, but that probably in neither Army is the number so large as you'd expect.

This part of the Middle West has seen no war. The Civil War passed it by. The only shots heard have been gangsters' shots. To-night a handsome woman, beautifully turned out, curled up on her couch and asked me what was the matter with a compromise peace? She's against the war altogether, she said. And the Treaty of Versailles was so awful she was glad America had nothing to do with it. Besides, further wars were inevitable, so the sooner this one stopped, the better. Um!

There's an interesting piece, too, in a paper called *The Progressive*. The writer is Fred Rodell, a Professor of Law at Yale. He calls himself an Anglophilephobe, says America cannot afford to be the lone big altruist, internationalist, the

long big sucker of the post-war world. Were he an Englishman (and he likes them fine), he'd agree with Churchill that the big invasion should be in the Balkans, where British troops might stake our claim to rich oilfields before Russia gets there first, and he'd approve British insistence on British agents making United Nations purchases in South America with U.S. Lend-Lease money in order to get a start on South American business after the war, and he might approve pregnant British silence about Hong-Kong and Singapore, and also the sudden suggestion that air-fields leased to U.S.A. for ninety-nine years have been leased only for military and not commercial purposes. Now, I'll wager this gentleman would be excessively pained were an Englishman to animadvert on our ally, America, to this same tune.

George Santayana sums up America in his *Persons and Places*. He says they lack the desire to be poor in order to be simple, to produce less in order that the product may be more choice and beautiful . . . they are infatuated with quantity. But there is a fund of vigour, goodness and hope such as no nation ever possessed before. That's well said.

Remark to me by the foreign editor of a newspaper: "There are only four newspapers in America a man can work on if he's a liberal and cares about things."

*January 23rd, 1944.*

St. Louis had a sun hidden in foggy mist when our inordinately long train rumbled past the miles of flat, muddy fields and industrial land littered with bits of wood, as though old wooden huts had been torn down by a raging wind. Factories, waste land, mud, streets—oil, steel, lumber, chemicals; it might have been a picce of Yorkshire. Painted on a gable end: "Dry goods for the funeral director." What mystery lies there? On the muddy Mississippi lay two or three old river boats—the *Senator*, an attempt at one like a warship and named *Admiral*; a sign on another reads: "Old Time Melodrama." But the three look the worse for wear—no hopes of sailing therein just now. A train pulled out with a searchlight shining in its nose and named "The Burlington Silver Wings." Another came towards us tail first, the tail bearing a sign, "Sunshine Special." *Tobacco Road*, Erskine Caldwell's grim comedy of Georgia, is showing at the theatre. St. Louis knows more about the South than does Chicago; here meet South and North.

Here Negroes are not segregated on street-cars, but they have their own hotels and schools. Strange city, St. Louis, famous when rivers and waterways were more important than rail; a place to which came the Germans of a century ago. They're still here—you can hear some German spoken in the southerly streets, see it in signs. O this America!

This small world! The Consul in St. Louis fought at Fonquevillers in France in the last war, where I was in the trenches, too. The Vice-Consul was an undergraduate at Oxford when Robert Donat played my *Red Night* there.

I like the friendliness of the American question, "Are you taken care of?" Waiters use it. I like the way servants reply, "You're welcome," when you thank them.

When I told some men at lunch that American middle-class folk seem to be better-fed than we've ever been, a physician present said: "But 80 per cent. of our people are underfed."

An American crime reporter in one of the cities I've visited showed me the fake police star he carries in his pocket to persuade witnesses of crimes or neighbours living nearby to tell him what they know! Reporters, he said, ring up from police H.Q. seeking information. Often people won't talk, doubt who their questioners are; and a reporter will sometimes say: "I'm Lieut. So-and-So, of the police. If you doubt me, call back Police H.Q. Here's the telephone number."

A bit of history: After Pearl Harbour, an American-British tobacco combine in Peking continued working its factories for the Japanese! They did this for several months in a vain attempt to preserve their business and premises from the Japs. It failed, of course. So soon as it served the Japs' purpose, they shut the places down or confiscated them.

My informant (who was there) adduced it as evidence of the decay in principle that can occur among folk long—too long—resident in an alien clime. I posed the query in *War in the Sun* as to whether Europeans are really suited to the Far East.

The Chinese approach to many things is as topsy-turvy as their method of writing—which is from right to left. If your Chinese servant asks for a fortnight off to bury his grandmother, you don't know whether he *has* a grandmother or whether you've insulted him, and this is his way of saving face.

Visiting a Chinese brothel (I'm told) often involves, first, meeting the girl's family, having tea, and indulging in a lengthy polite conversation.

January 25th, 1944.

Last night I saw *Tobacco Road*—the play that has been playing in America for ten years, and has made six million dollars. I began to read the novel of that name by Erskine Caldwell some years back, but didn't finish it. The play describes the life of poor whites in Georgia. *Love on the Dole* depicted a life that was luxurious compared with that in this play, for in Georgia raw turnips are a delicacy, the characters dress in rags and life is pitiable in the extreme. But this is not, in my judgment, what draws the crowds. What draws them is the sexiness and the blasphemies in the play. The pretty girl has never gone to bed with her husband; a middle-aged woman preacher, having lost her husband, is so anxious to wed again that she bribes with a motor-car a boy of sixteen to espouse her, and the old father, white-haired, Rabelaisian and with a good deal of Joxer Daly in him, is a mixture of robustiousness, rollicking fun and barefaced lechery. I thought, at times, a couple would go to bed before our eyes. The core is tragic, indeed, and the lesson powerful, but it was like water on a duck's back. The audience was tickled to death. (Not that I suggest an American audience is different from any other.) The comic stuff was played for all it was worth until, when a young girl with a hardlip whom nobody wants was driven by despair and anguish to gibbering when she tried to unburden her tortured heart, the audience roared with laughter.

So that I was rather short when I was asked to-day, over lunch with half a dozen business men fifteen miles out of St. Louis, whether tales of "all this immorality in England" are true. I said: "I would say there's more here. So far as I can learn, you start earlier, and go on later. A good many of those I meet have been married twice and some three times. You live at an indoors temperature winter and summer of fifteen degrees warmer than Britain. You're really a sub-tropical country, and sub-tropics make for promiscuity. Your girls develop physically earlier than ours, and necking parties at fifteen and sixteen are commonplace. Of course, there's immorality in Britain. It's always so in war, and especially in countries overrun by invading troops." One or two murmured they guessed I was right, and the subject dropped.

A student of America and I had been talking on this subject

during the morning. A manifestation of the worser side of life here at the moment is the popularity of Sinatra, the "swooning" crooner. When he sings girls moan—and some are alleged to swoon.

The unfortunate thing is that in America the cultural side of life is left largely to women—men are too busy making "brass." The Sinatra cult is a bad start for leaders of a cultural life!

But my meeting with those American men over lunch was most encouraging. They were liberal-minded men, several of them keen on Federal Union. Were all Americans as reasonable, the future would be bright. One said: "I used to think we should not enter this war at all or give any help except for money placed on the barrel, but I now see I was wrong." Of course, they said, suspicions remain—the old ones of our being so much cleverer. A lumber-merchant who denounced the machinations of Big Business in selling to the enemy up to the last moment the stuff to blow their lads and ours to pieces, said he didn't think Americans would ever get over the fact that we didn't pay our War Debts last time. I pointed out that more was left owing us than we owed America, although I realised that was no compensation to them. I went on: "An average Englishman might say to you, were he being blunt, that you now agree that you were right to come into the last war and into this war—but that you did so each time two years late. If you concede that these were your wars, as they were ours, which shall you reckon the greater price, the war debts we didn't pay you, or the million dead we lost in the Great War? For which of us here would not give all the money he possesses to save the life of his son?" The lumber-merchant said: "I agree with you. I've said the same thing myself."

In spite of all this country's faults—and they're no greater than any other country's—here is an immense fund of decency, kindness and good nature. America's very innocence in world affairs, the attitude of many of her citizens that, because America has her independence, every colony should have it immediately, the assumption that every boy in the world is as intelligent as an American boy—this is itself a spur, a driving force to the world at large. America is, in this sense, the Labour Party of the political parties, pioneering. (Though in other senses America is as far from being Labour as can be. Reactionary at home and liberal overseas—that is occasionally the way of it.)

We had driven out from St. Louis across the Mississippi. Roads varied from good roads to cinder-tracks. The previous day had been almost like an English day in late May or June—warm and sunny; no need for an overcoat. Now it was dull and misty, the river coated in mist. Along the river chugged low sawn-off steam-boats, pushing a square, flat iron barge—made one think it was a commercial submarine that might go underneath at any moment. The roadside and fields beyond were parched—dry soil and tall, stringy grasses, burnt-out, with no life in them. This was peculiarly so when we drove near the confluence of the Mississippi and the Missouri. Last May this land was flooded—the floods were bad—and the land is still muddy, and trees torn-up by the roots lie about. The village where we met our hosts is close to three big oil refineries—and these refineries, in their need for labour, have drawn off many men from smaller works. My host had lost several men—“I can’t compete with a wage of 75 dollars a week paid by the large works for doing office work, though that 75 dollars includes some overtime.” Another man pointed to a steelworks—“They get an average of 100 dollars a week there.” I wonder? Wages quoted casually are almost always exaggerated.

Thirty years ago this small township didn’t exist—nothing but fields and pieces of marshy land. The houses are built mainly of wood—some pleasing to look at, but some, occupied by Negroes or poorer whites, wearing a derelict air. To-day the township is finding drafts for the Army—seventy-eight went last night, men up to thirty-eight years old, though members of the Draft Committee tell me about 50 per cent. of men of that age are rejected and return home. Of my handful of business men, several had served in France in the last war. One said: “We thought we knew all there was to know. We were arrogant. I remember that before we had heard a shot fired, we were living close to some British troops. Now, these British had been in a lot of fighting, had been reduced from a division to a battalion. We didn’t get on too well because we thought we knew all *they* knew. Now, if any of us Americans saw fifty days in the actual trenches, it was as much as we did.” How beautifully frank and modest that is!

Some of the American newspapers have a fine objective. The *Chicago Sun* prints every day: “The news columns shall be fair and accurate; the editorial columns shall be honest and just in the expression of conscientious opinion.” And again: “Truth is armed and can defend itself—Massinger.”

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, founded by Joseph Pulitzer, prints its platform daily: "It will always fight for progress and reform, never tolerate injustice or corruption, always fight demagogues of all parties, never belong to any party, always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to the public welfare; never be satisfied with merely printing news; always be drastically independent; never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty." Joseph Pulitzer wrote that when he retired in 1907. I couldn't approve it more. It needs some living up to! I am sorry to see some papers of supposed repute still printing horoscopes—those encouragements to people not to think.

Americans keep sounding warnings. I observe that Associate Justice Robert H. Jackson of the U.S. Supreme Court says the war is a struggle between divergent and irreconcilable philosophies. "Can we in America say with assurance that our own people in numbers that begin to be significant do not entertain much the same divergent and almost uncompromising outlook upon life?" He thinks cleavage between Rightist and Leftist becomes wider, that religious controversies are increasing and that racial animosities and competitions are *assuming a more ominous and sullen aspect*. He was addressing the New York State Bar Association.

*January 27th, 1944.*

I lunched to-day at the Shumacher Restaurant—wooden tables, wooden wainscoting, heads of hunted beasts on the walls. A young lawyer next to me said if Germany were treated as roughly after this war as she was after the last, we should have all the makings of another war. I said that we in England would not be willing to see her with weapons, or the wherewithal to make them. One of our party, a lively old man, proposed a toast: "To the Queen!" Some codology on this, and another toast by a man who said: "Never mind our past, I give you a toast: 'To our unspotted future!'—since it's unspotted up to now."

After lunch, to look over the old Courthouse on the steps of which slaves were once sold. St. Louis was once a Spanish village, in the 1850's it was the principal gateway to the West, and in 1870 the third largest city in the country. To-day it has well over a million people, is very rich, sprawling, and industrial—from the windows of the University Club it fills the

whole landscape, as if London lay beneath you. It was in St. Louis that the first kindergarten schools and the first manual training schools were formed—or so its proud citizens assure me. Here it was that Elijah Lovejoy lived, a man they claim was the first to give his life for freedom of the Press. Ultimately he was shot in the back. He wrote against slavery. What a magnificent name for a novel of olden days—Elijah Lovejoy! But good names are here still—St. Louis's chief citizen to-day is named Luther Ely Smith. Next, I went on to the Missouri Athletic Club, where in the middle of this glorious day a dozen or two middle-aged men were playing cards. This is one of the minor tragedies of America, that young men are too busy making "brass" to become cultured, and that when they retire, as many do still full of vigour, they have no spiritual resources. But I dare say this is true of Britain too, though perhaps to a less extent. In the club I met a Yorkshireman from Bradford who came here thirty-two years ago and founded a business. I asked if he had known J. B. Priestley, but the name meant nothing to him—he thought I was referring to the Priestleys in the mackintosh and suiting trade, and told me how, when last in Bradford and sitting in the snug of a public-house, a man fingered his suit and said: "Um, that's but a twelve-ounce cloth—we like 'em eighteen-ounce round here."

In the evening I spoke to the Women Voters' League—they have groups in thirty-six or thirty-eight states; liberal-minded, progressive women. In the Chair was their President, Mrs. Edna Gellhorn, mother of Martha Gellhorn, who is married to Ernest Hemingway. Mrs. Gellhorn is a redoubtable, grey-eyed woman, full of courage. She said that from twenty-five to forty women would be coming, but a hundred turned up, sat on the stairs, and overflowed into the next room. I told them that they had better set on one side the price of *not* collaborating in post-war affairs—which is war, and then see how far, if needs be, we've got to go in payment of a price which is less; no use falling out over trifles. They asked me a host of questions—we went on over two hours—questions on the merchant marine, Ireland, the House of Lords. Has England avoided inflation? What are we doing to arrange for getting our people back from the Forces into civilian life? Why do I think England has moved towards the Left? What ought America to do about her trade unions? Is England as suspicious of Russia as America is? And so on. Finally, a woman said, "We hear a lot of criticism of Britain. What criticisms has of England America?" To this



I said I would answer bluntly: that an average Englishman might think America is too obsessed by money. Would they set their lost dollars against the lives of our lost men? This bluntness was by far the most successful thing I said—it was received at first in silence and next with applause, and women came up after the meeting was over to thank me. Mrs. Gellhorn rose and said: "I hope we shall hear no more about the cost of Lend-Lease."

A great drive is on for War Bond sales. My companion this morning called in a bank to buy two or three thousand. He's bought 20,000 this past year or so. No death duties are payable on War Bonds, so it's a good investment for a middle-aged man. On a table near the manager's desk stood a glass mirror in which there flashed in and out: "Buy War Bonds." To help the drive, the O.W.I. has just published several thousand words of Japanese atrocities, some of them two years old. Cries of "Hang the Mikado" and "Bomb Japan out of existence" roared out in Congress. Some papers are condemning the withholding of these facts for two years; one official answer is that it was thought previous publication would prevent the Japs mending their ways, but hopes of the Japs permitting further relief supplies to reach prisoners is now abandoned. This atrocity material will further concentrate U.S.A. opinion on the war against Japan, unless I am mistaken.

The men working at a chemical factory I visited earn about 70 dollars a week. The normal working week is forty hours; beyond that they draw time and a half. They're working about fifty hours. As I sat in the office, the radio was crooning—"I'll be with you always, some day, one day, always . . ." To this clerks were working, typewriters going.

The weather is superb—like an English May. It is unseasonable and, I'm told, unhealthy. What care I?

*January 28th, 1944.*

I went this morning in company with my Yorkshireman to see his factory. On the way we passed a cemetery covering miles of gently undulating and lightly wooded countryside—he said it's six or seven miles across and the same in length. Here General Sherman is buried, and an Englishman named Sir William Stokes. Of Sherman it's said that when he lived here, retired from the wars, his neighbours, during a time of

drought, objected to his laying the dust in front of his house with a hosepipe—they said it was wasting water. So the General packed up and took his departure; he only returned as a dead man. That's the story told me in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (which has been called the *Manchester Guardian* of America). The tale about Sir William Stokes was told me by an eminent citizen of St. Louis, a lawyer. Part of the story, at all events, reposes in legal records. It goes thus: When the Prince Regent of England (afterwards George the Fourth) married Caroline, he soon tired of her. He was advised that if he delved into her past he would find excuse for filling her place, so he despatched Sir William Stokes and Beau Brummell to Europe to find the evidence. They were gone a year or more. They duly reported, but the King did nothing drastic. Perhaps his emissaries' findings got bruited abroad—at any rate, he decided he would be happier with them out of the country. So he called them to him, saying: "Gentlemen, you have served me well. I am obliged to you, and I am going to give you thirty thousand pounds each, but I must ask you at the same time to spend your remaining years outside the four corners of this country." Brummell decided to sojourn in Paris, and thither Sir William also was proposing to betake himself when he met a convivial companion, a fur-trader of St. Louis. The fur-trader quoth: "Why go to Paris, where your money will go nowhere? Come to St. Louis, where you can live like a king!" This tickled Sir William's fancy, and he approached his wife for her agreement. She said, being a woman of character: "By all means go to St. Louis—but I will not, my dear, accompany you. For during your absence I made a friend, a dear friend, indeed, the King himself. I am, in point of fact, the dearest friend he has, Friend Number One." So Sir William, being a man of the world, said: "Well, well, that is very interesting. Very interesting indeed. I will go to St. Louis by all means." But being, as I said, a man of the world, and having no intention of going alone, he found an attractive lady to accompany him who journeyed as, I've no doubt, Lady Stokes. In St. Louis they lived, occupying a farm of 140 acres or so. The new "Lady Stokes's" sister followed them and in due time married a prominent citizen of the city. But alas! there came a time when King George tired of the true Lady Stokes and she became Friend Number Two—and then no friend at all. Bethinking her of her husband in St. Louis, she came to the city and, like most wives, true or untrue, found the establishment in her stead of the second "Lady Stokes" something that

was insupportable. And she brought an action. The action went on a long time—so long, in fact, that during its course Sir William died; and next the masquerading Lady Stokes died, and finally the real Lady Stokes also departed this life. And the principal lawyer, not having been paid his fees, took possession of the estate of 140 acres.

American women did not really begin to drink seriously till Prohibition days. Then, it became a matter of prestige whether your husband or you could get hold of a case of whisky. If you could, you did. And you began to drink whisky. I said to my friend who vouchsafed this bit of history (he's a well-known lawyer): "Have morals improved under the drinking?" He shook his head. "No, I guess not."

In a business house this morning I was given a loose-leaf diary for 1944. On every fourth page is a drawing as lively as those from *La Vie Parisienne* which graced dug-outs in the last war.

Americans hereabouts pronounce "fertile," "furtle," and "futile," "futtle."

While a touch of the tar-brush (negro blood) is a disgrace, a touch of Red Indian blood, if sufficiently far back, is something to be proud of!

I've met three groups of most friendly and rather liberal-minded men and women over luncheon tables or at meetings, but whether they're very typical, I doubt. It's certain that a lot are friendly towards us now who were not a year or two ago, but there's a solid mass who are, for want of a better word, reactionary. A man who speaks fairly often in public always says: "The English have no eternal friendships, only eternal self-interests." After dinner last night with half a dozen men and women who're good friends, I asked what they would say to someone in England if writing about the Middle West. Curious to see how a man and his wife differed. She said: "I think the forces that made for isolation are still there. Remember, 75 per cent. of St. Louis people are, or were, German. Earlier in the war they were pro-Nazi, or a lot were, at any rate. They're quiet now, but as for supporting England against Germany—no! I could take you to a part of this city where you'd get no support at all." She didn't think the

teaching of American history in schools harmed us, because that was soon counteracted by the reading of English literature. Her husband, a Czech, disagreed—early history was a factor, he thought, but he didn't believe German origin was; what mattered, in his view, was Republicanism and anti-Rooseveltism, coupled with a strong Catholic element. Catholic influence was powerful in the State Department—witness Darlan, Badoglio, Franco and suspicion of Russia.

January 29th, 1944.

I spent half an hour this morning with Mr. Charles H. Compton, the City Librarian, a man who has investigated who reads what, and why? He has been finding out how many readers there have been, in a given period, of sixteen books on the problems of peace and the post-war world, among them Agar's *A Time for Greatness*, Norman Angell's *Let the People Know*, Stuart Chase's *When the War Ends*, and so forth. There were 521 readers, among them 81 students, 33 clerks, 24 salesmen and saleswomen, 10 chemists, 7 physicians, 9 insurance agents, etc. The replies he quotes are encouraging. A salesman says that "for a nation to retire into monastic seclusion . . . is surely fatal, and is indeed the meat on which Fascism feeds." An old man of eighty writes: "The depression and now the war have been a liberal education for the American people in many ways, fitting them the better to understand government, economics, and world affairs. The work to be done will be stupendous but inspiring to the American temperament." A housewife: "Until we educate our 'little people' that what hurts the man at the other end of the world hurts us too, we shall not get very far." A high school teacher writes: "Who to-day would abolish democracy, the public school system, the income tax? Who would tell the Government not to control trusts, regulate commerce, safeguard health, draft an army in wartime? Yet at one time none of these seemed desirable to the majority." A post office clerk says that in the past two years he has read some sixty-three books on the war!

There's a touching beginning to a letter from an unemployed woman of seventy-two: "No snow falls lighter than the snow of age, and none is heavier, for it never melts."

As Mr. Compton says: "If the letters quoted are a sample of St. Louis predominant thought, then America's people are looking forward to building a better world than the one we now have."

This library in the heart of America has five of my books, two of them not even published in the United States—testimony to broadmindedness.

In 1930 it was estimated that the white population of the United States (then 108,864,207) was, as to over 41 per cent., derived from Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 16 per cent. from Germany, 11 per cent. from Eire, 4 per cent. Poland, 3½ per cent. Italy, and 3½ per cent. Scandinavia (among others). Negroes then numbered 11,891,143, Indians 332,397, Japanese 138,834, Chinese 74,954.

But the *World Almanac* for 1943 gives the foreign-born whites as: England 621,975, Scotland 279,321, Wales 35,360, Northern Ireland 106,416, Eire 572,031, Germany 1,237,772, Russia 1,040,884, Italy 1,623,580, Austria 479,906.

An Irishman of St. Louis writes me that "we have a population of three millions in the hills sprung from the domestic servants of the colonists who settled the Carolinas. Until recently they were illiterate . . . they still fiddle the tunes of 300 years ago, and mother eats after the family has been served, as in many British localities, and calls her husband 'Mister.' They've a rigid set of social forms, and if given normal education rise to high places, but they often suffer from vitamin deficiencies due to their diet of 'soda biscuits' and fat pork. A literature is arising and their folk songs and speech are being recorded. They hate Papistry and preserve the *duello*. In spite of their generally emaciated condition, they are extraordinarily brave, proud and reserved."

To-night to the St. Louis Symphony concert. On a huge cloth star hung behind the orchestra the figure 22 was emblazoned—this being the number of orchestra players serving their country. The soloist was Isaac Stern, a Russian violinist. He played the Brahms Concerto in D Major with immense verve. After the first movement, he shook hands with the conductor, a young man, Harry Farbman, who is more usually the first violin. They shook hands partly because, I imagine, this was an occasion for them both, but also because these are an emotional people. Among the directors of the symphony society is Mrs. Adolphus Busch III, so written on the programme. She is of the third dynasty of the local brewing family. Some tradesmen are prouder than poets.

How, I wonder, does a man become a player of percussion, or tympani, or even the double bass? Has he a passion for one

of these, or is he a superannuated 'cellist or trumpet-player? But these gentlemen were not to-night, and are not, necessarily ancients. To-night a lady sawed at the double bass. Maybe they are the altruists, the pure-souled in a wicked world. After all, somebody must beat the drum, must pluck the bass strings.

January 30th, 1944.

Some fine bits in the *Post-Dispatch* to-day. Under the heading, "Right!" there's quoted Representative Eaton of New Jersey, who says: "The United States cannot exist as an island of prosperity in an ocean of adversity." The *Post-Dispatch* comments: "Downright right, as right as rain in a drouth of errors. As what, then, can the United States exist? As a star of brotherhood in a constellation of nations." The *Post-Dispatch* applauds the showdown with Franco, and says, talking of propaganda in general, that the O.W.I. will do the greatest service to the people and the war programme if it will make certain that the news is made available accurately and promptly. "The intelligence of the American people is such that when informed of the facts, they form sound judgments. Not even war justifies the imposition on us of an official 'propaganda line.'" That's well said.

The journal laments the death of William Allen White, an old journalist of Emporia, a man who kept lit the lamp of liberalism and fearlessness. A column of his wisdom and wit is printed, among it a dissertation on "What is Kansas?" He says Kansas is a state of mind, a psychological phase, a symptom . . . the Mother Shipton, the Madam Thebes, the Witch of Endor and the low barometer of the nation. When anything is going to happen, it happens first in Kansas. Abolition, Prohibition, Populism, the Bull Moose, exit of the roller towel, the blue sky law . . . these things came tumbling out of Kansas like bats out of hell. Sooner or later other states take up these things, then Kansas goes on breeding other troubles. Why, no one seems to know.

To tea in a seven-roomed flat overlooking the park, a flat filled with mellow sunshine; rent 130 dollars a month for this young business man with wife and two children. I mentioned the *American Social Register*, and they produced it—a thick book for New York, a thin one for St. Louis. My host said that one good thing about the *Register* is that it tells you whom your girl friend married—you can look her up under her maiden name, find the name of the fellow she married and trace where she is.

He said the New York volume costs 6 or 7 dollars a year. The volume has little or no biographical stuff such as *Who's Who* gives—it's more like a telephone directory than *Who's Who*.

I like the story of the distinguished woman writer in St. Louis some time ago who was mistress of a famous man. She was asked at a women's meeting, St. Louis being in "the Bible Belt," "Do you believe in free love?" She replied instantly: "Yes. What sort do *you* believe in?"

Stories of former United States generals current here: That General Grant, when retired, earned a living splitting wood; that Lincoln, when it was complained to him that a successful general drank too much, quoth: "I wish I knew the brand of whisky he drinks, so that I could tell the other generals."

Do Americans love noise as noise? The policemen on point duty in St. Louis, in addition to using their arms in the normal way, blow a whistle incessantly. They blow them as small boys might do. From time to time an ambulance or police car screams past with a wailing that pales the air raid siren in London.

The society page of the *Post-Dispatch* to-day advertises a new stunt: "Your photograph on your stationery. Personalise it!"

When a man is called up, the message telling him to report for physical examination begins: "Greetings from the President." This has become something of an ironic joke.

I saw a curious Christian name of a Negro child—"Charlotteseeta." The Negroes invent new ones.

The *Post-Dispatch* to-day has eleven comic strips, two "Believe it or Not" features, eight adventure strips in colour, and a society page with an advertisement asking: "Do your lips pass the kiss test?" There's a picture of Charlie Chaplin and his "youthful fourth wife." The journal is eighty-four pages.

It is difficult not to be surprised at certain manifestations of the American Home Front. And yet is our own in Britain so perfect? Not at all. America is far away from war, and human imagination is pitifully small. Were it not, we might not have had this war. Were it not, having the war, we should be unable to endure it. Moreover, so many Americans are the same stock

as those responsible for this war, Germans, Italians, Japanese. (At this moment there's an outcry in Colorado to prevent Japanese aliens acquiring land.) Many of these either can't believe their brothers are wrong, or they don't credit the atrocity stories. Some few may even think the atrocities justified in war. Again, these folk have come from a Europe they had learnt perhaps to hate or to fear, and with which they wish to have nothing further to do. In any of these cases, is it reasonable to expect them to be very anxious to die fighting in Europe? Not very. That they do it is some testimony to them and to the spirit of man.

An Irishman writes me to-day from New York: "This is a large and fabulous country with many large faults and many large virtues. Some English people only discern one side, come away exclaiming at the barbarians or of the chosen land and people. I think what is most notable about us is a strain of idealism and innocence which is manifested in many ways—and often enough it gets stamped on and it makes us draw back into our shells. Along with this idealism goes the commercial offset. I think most nations and most individuals sway between poles, exhibiting the most diverse characteristics and in the future some smart psychologist will be able to formulate some law about the gyrations. I remember a rich old lady in Ireland who did more to foster young genius than anyone else, bringing poor young talent up to town, sending young artists over to France and so on. Yet the servants in her house had to eat margarine and were fed and paid worse than maids in much poorer families. The Irish people themselves exhibit this polarity in their mysticism and their cruelty."

Later he writes: "Even what you think the mildest of criticisms might have a bad effect over here. You see, this country isn't in the war as England is and can't be, for the very good reason that it is not as imminent. It is no use pointing out the long-range threat. That never affects people. It didn't touch the English much when China and Ethiopia and Spain were involved . . . most people have a subdued thought that this war is less ours than a helping hand to England, and for this reason they will expect much gratitude and they will resent greatly any critics. . . . It may be that the Divine Being feels as much anguish for the starved Chinese baby as for the fallen American soldier, but human beings have not attained this cosmic sensitivity and so are most affected by what is close—and the war for most Americans is just not close enough, in spite of sons or husbands in the war."



A great deal of sound sense in what he says. But I have a notion that part of the American sensitivity to criticism arises from their failure to be sure of themselves. They desperately want to be liked because they suspect they have grave faults. (No doubt we are all alike in that.) They may even, at bottom, be modest and afraid, and this leads to their boastfulness. But is it any good flattering them and pandering to them and encouraging them to feel they are saving the world for the second time and that we are all at their feet prostrate with gratitude? I don't think so. Their greatest fear, that of being a sucker, individually or as a nation, springs not from meanness, for they are a generous folk, but because they know their shortcomings and fear they may have one "put over them."

At St. Louis Cathedral this morning, we sang the Old Hundredth ("Praise God, from whom all blessings flow . . .") just before the sermon was preached. The preacher declared that auto-suggestion, and the psychological healer, have nothing on Christianity for achieving results, and are not, in fact, in the same street.

In St. Louis, Negroes have their own schools and cinemas, but they're as welcome in the Public Library as are whites, and they're not segregated on street-cars. Fifteen miles out, however, within the past few weeks a Negro family moving into a village was run out again by a demonstrating crowd of whites. Several Negro women were at my meeting of women voters. Some argue that the Negroes are happier in the South under a feudal system of kindness (but it isn't always kindly, by any means). What are higher wages? these argue, just as in England you can find a farm labourer who thinks he was better off in old days when he got his piece of land, free milk, fuel, potatoes and cider along with low wages. But, in the long view, I think higher wages and more independence is the better thing.

By the way, Lincoln, who ended slavery, did not fight the Civil War with that as a chief purpose. He wrote in 1862: "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save, or to destroy, slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

I am forming the conclusion that Americans don't take life so seriously as we English. They enjoy life more. To-day, when lunching with a pair of young Americans, man and wife, they started by having each a double dry Martini. They've fewer inhibitions.

St. Louis has, in the summer time, an open-air opera.

Truth. What is truth? I'm moved to inquire by a young friend telling me how, in China, the selling of rice by Chinese to their Jap enemies is not uncommon and is thought not immoral. He says: "It has always been so in China. What matters is that the Chinese, nevertheless, are fighting the Japs to a standstill. It's results that count."

*January 30th, 1944.*

Getting away from towns is not always easy. You arrive at a railway station which may or may not be the right one (at Chicago the taximan drove first to the wrong one), and then you hunt for a red-cap porter, who may be rare as ham and eggs in England. Finally, you get to your train and you may find, as I did at St. Louis, that the Pullman Company had let the roomette I was allotted twice over. A Danish gentleman was already in possession. However, he was a nice fellow, and we shared it together for some hours until I was given another. It's not unknown for three men to arrive all with the same reservation, for these bookings are made long in advance, my own five weeks back.

This roomette is ingenious—the bed pulls down, already made, from where it fits into the wall; you push your shoes through a small metal door (and *mirabile dictu!* this morning they had been cleaned—unique since I reached America). The coach, viewed from outside, was curved and steel, as though it were a battleship. But the train swung a good deal, so that I had to lie for a time on my back to avoid rolling to and fro.

I've just finished reading Wendell Willkie's *One World*. A good book in many ways, bringing to millions of folk an impressive picture of how the world has shrunk, and how urgent it is that we see it as one whole. His conclusions are that America's withdrawal from world affairs after the last war was a contributing factor to instability during the last twenty years, and that to withdraw once more after this war would be

sheer disaster. Equally important, he sees how urgent it is that tariff and trade barriers should be broken down. "Our present standard of living in America," he says, "cannot be maintained unless the exchange of goods flows more freely over the whole world. It is also inescapably true that to raise the standard of living of any man anywhere in the world is to raise the standard by some slight degree of every man everywhere in the world." This last point seems to me more debatable. Don't some men become rich inasmuch as others become poor? However, his intent is good. What is true is that America and ourselves will only preserve our standard by jealousing that of others; if that isn't done, normal human jealousies and envies will lead to war. Only altruism is realism.

Willkie is against the re-creation as economic and military units of all the small nations of Europe, but approves their re-creation as political units. How the two are to be split up, I'm not sure, and I'm not certain that he is. I've always doubted the wisdom of the Atlantic Charter's pledges to these small nations. Europe pre-war was a powder barrel. Are we to re-constitute that? A Chicago banker said to me: "To do that would be madness."

Willkie's foreign policy doesn't seem to me markedly different from Roosevelt's. It isn't surprising therefore that some die-hard Republicans loathe Willkie and might even prefer to vote for Roosevelt. Some of Willkie's critics ironically call him "The carbon copy."

I am willing to make a small bet that Roosevelt will run for a fourth term, and that he will succeed. A Republican editor near Denver said with regret that he thinks this will happen. He had been describing Roosevelt to me as a vain man, handsome, with a good voice, but low ability, and no judgment in picking men. Willkie he pronounced much abler; Dewey also. But then he was a Republican.

*January 31st, 1944.*

Denver is coated with snow. Denver, Colorado. Mining camps. Deadwood Dick. A picture, unbidden, springs to mind. We're now over 5,000 feet up. Streets covered with snow trodden into ice and slush. After a lunch with radio commentators, I was driven a hundred miles to Cheyenne, on the borders of Wyoming. With a modicum of imagination, I could have thought myself back in the Western Desert. The country was flat and bare, brown coated with thin snow, and on the

left ran a ridge of the Rocky Mountains, but a low ridge and not much higher than the Western Desert escarpment. The world hereabouts is a vasty place, the air brilliantly clear and fine and dry and the spirit can go bounding. Odd things to see, too. We passed a wooden house being bodily transported by truck; we ran by advertisements spaced out, two words every fifty yards or so; one lot told of an hotel, and the last device said, "Two for the price of one." Charming. An enormous bird like a vulture sat on a tall pole.

I had some talk about American schools; my friend's boy, who is about ten years old, goes to a school where for the first hour of the day they read a book of their own choice and for the first half-hour after lunch they sing. They must be broken in gently. Little girls of ten paint their nails just as their mothers do. Discipline in child-upbringing is not, seemingly, an American strong point.

To-night our dinner party included Mr. Lester Hunt, Governor of Wyoming, formerly a dentist, Dr. J. L. Morill, President of Wyoming University (formerly a journalist), Mr. I. L. Hanna, Mayor of Cheyenne, Brigadier-General Horace Whittaker (who lived as a child in Nelson, Lancashire), Judge T. B. Kennedy and some others. We were each given a steak that must have covered thirty square inches—I made singularly small impression on mine. Some talk of child delinquency and a story told of a boy of fifteen who has been in a scrape, and, in addition, married a girl of fourteen (with the girl's parents' consent) and begotten a child by her. My neighbour at dinner was Mr. J. L. Goins, Superintendent of the schools. In the middle of America they have some problems akin to ours; their teachers, for example, draw about 40 dollars a week, and girls leaving school and working on war products can make quite as much. We talked of history as taught in the schools—I spoke of us British getting off on the wrong foot, and he kindly invited me to visit a school and discuss it with two or three history teachers.

After dinner, to a hall where three British films were shown and I was called on to speak for two or three minutes. The third film was Paul Rotha's *World of Plenty*—a fine piece of work about which, on seeing it nine months ago, I was enthusiastic; yet, seeing it again here, I thought it unfortunate—first, in that it talks at great length of America's aid to us, but makes no mention of reverse Lend-Lease (it couldn't, since at that time nothing had been said about Lend-Lease), and, second, that

it uses in one place Henry Wallace's voice and words and Mr. Wallace, unhappily, is almost the worst spokesman for anybody in America to-day. Moreover, it seems implicit in this film that America is expected to feed the entire world—that's the impression that a critical American may easily get, and that is one of the worst notions he could get into his cranium at this time. All his fears of being the world's sucker (this abominable and ugly phrase) might well be deepened. In short, I think *World of Plenty* would be better in cold storage so far as America goes. Dr. Morrill and Mr. Goins, shrewd men and good friends, share this view. We went on for a drink to the Governor's house, a handsome house the Governor of Wyoming always occupies. The Governor draws a salary, as does the mayor of a city. Here I met Mr. John C. Thompson, Editor of one of the two local papers. Mr. Thompson has been a working journalist in Cheyenne, this "small town," for forty-five years, yet he has the air of having just walked in full sail down Fifth Avenue or Piccadilly—the best turned-out man at the party. I asked if people ever cut him in the street because of what he's written. He said they do—but it is transitory. He offends one man, but somebody else is delighted; two days later the delighted man is pained and the former affronted man is pleased. So it works round. His journal has a mail edition for going far afield, where it arrives a day late. So he has two dates printed on the front page, one of which is blocked out. Those who read the paper far-off *know* the paper is the paper of the day before, but they like it to bear the date of the day on which they read it. Mr. Thompson has tried once or twice to stop using this innocent deceit, but the readers won't allow it; they insist on being deceived. A psychiatrist would read something into that, I trow.

He asked if I had noticed that a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army has recently sold a host of batteries for 130 dollars, and those batteries have already been re-sold for 25,000 dollars? The junior officer condemned and sold them because a fire had occurred nearby, and he assumed the batteries were no longer efficient.

Cheyenne has two local papers, one Republican, one Democrat. I'm assured that the same man owns both. You couldn't be more strictly impartial than that, now, could you?

At the film-showing a small, fresh-complexioned, grey-eyed man came up to me saying he had gate-crashed. He was born in Oldham, Lancashire, he said, and worked as a cotton spinner

there till thirty years old. His son is an Intelligence Officer in our Army and his three nephews are in the R.A.F. He was as stamped with Lancashire as he was thirty years ago.

*February 1st, 1944.*

I talked for an hour this morning with a headmaster and two teachers of history. They gave me three books to glance at—*Our Nation's Development*, by Barker, Dodd and Commager, *Growth of the United States*, by R. V. Harlow, and *A History of Our Country*, by Muzzey. I've read the parts dealing with America's fight for her independence, and see nothing to object to. True, when British troops, taunted in Boston, fired on the mob, killing four and wounding several others, this is called by Muzzey in inverted commas "a massacre." Nor do I see how any American boy or girl can fail to regard what foolish King George and unwise Lord North did at that time as less than reprehensible. We emerge badly, because the facts are bad. But, after all, in the long run the creation of the United States was one of the finest things that has ever occurred. Stupidity was a forcing-house for the growth of man's spirit. The history teachers conceded that a teacher or a student may put his own interpretation on events, to our greater despite, but these teachers I met struck me as very fair-minded and, personally, most likeable. Boys are constantly leaving this school to go into the armed forces. The teachers said they go willingly, cheerfully, seeing that the war has to be fought and won. The senior teacher said it is a great pity that the facts of what Britain has done in this war are not better known. In his view, 75 per cent. of Americans think Lend-Lease works only one way.

Driving back to Denver, we called on another small-town editor, who explained that hereabouts are a number of Germans who, in days gone by, moved from Germany to Russia and became successful farmers—*kulaks*—but were later forced out by the Bolsheviks; a good many others were exterminated. Here is a minor sidelight on the problem of international relations. How can these Germans who survived be expected to look kindly on Russia? This editor feels there are a lot of Americans who would double-cross Russia without hesitation.

Phrases used in Cheyenne: A woman speaking of her elderly husband: "Yes, he's quite a little somebody." A woman admiring the moon: "Isn't it a honey?"

To-night I spoke to 200 U.S. air cadets at a nearby airfield. On this encampment are something like 10,000 air cadets, but only one padre holds an International Affairs Forum once a week. Those cadets who come, usually 200, devour what's said, and ask a host of questions. These lads were round about twenty years old. Another Englishman who spoke there recently told me it did him more good than any other experience in America, for the lads were far-sighted, the reverse of isolationist, and keen as mustard. I could almost say the same. They were quick to seize on a joke, they were courteous, and as good-looking a lot as you could wish to see. They asked me: Would England stick to all her Empire post-war, including India? Would Russia stop her advance short of England? What would be the effect of the war on the peoples of North Africa? What are we to do with the German Junkers? What about post-war education? How long yet before lads get an equal chance and every working boy can go to college? How soon will there be inter-planetary communication, and what effect will that have on this world of ours? What did England think of Roosevelt, and did we want him to be elected again? And, finally, did we think we were doing America a favour by fighting Japan? I said to that: "No more a favour than you are doing us by fighting Germany. Be in no doubt we're going to be in the Pacific in full force." On Roosevelt, I said we should be less than human were we not grateful to him, but that Roosevelt or Willkie is all the same to me personally, for I think Willkie's foreign policy excellent. I added that we shall only achieve lasting peace by extending prosperity.

The private who drove back to Denver with me wants to go to Oxford or Cambridge University after the war. He said: "For six months after even *our* war began, most of us felt England had dragged us into it, but it's O.K. now. I guess our fighting together in the field has made most of the difference; and every time we have an Englishman come and talk to us, that helps a lot, too."

*February 2nd, 1944.*

This morning a lawyer kindly took me round some of the courts. I asked him if living over 5,000 feet up makes a difference to health or temperament. He didn't think so, except that Denver, in his opinion, is the friendliest place in the world, with something of the frontier spirit remaining. (Others have said that Denver, after a time, makes you irritable; an editor

said that after twelve months one ought to go to the lowlands for a month. On the other hand, there are those who are never so full of energy as when this 5,000 feet up.)

We ran into a senior Federal judge, who unlocked his court, not sitting to-day, that we might look at it—a noble room with Grecian columns. This judge seemed the right side of fifty, so I asked at what age judges are appointed. The tendency, it seems, is to appoint them early—one judge was only thirty-seven. He himself was but thirty-two. He thinks forty a good age to begin. These are federal judges appointed by the President. But Denver, like other cities, has its district judges, appointed for only six years at a time, and these are elected by popular vote, in the manner of our city councillors or M.Ps. How, I wondered, can ordinary voters choose judges wisely? How can they know their skill or ability as lawyers? My guide, himself a lawyer, agreed that occasionally a holy terror gets elected judge, but that usually it works well enough.

This morning the news comes that Russia has given some sixteen provinces dominion over their own foreign affairs—which looks as tho' each of these sixteen may want a vote at a peace conference. I asked the judge what he thought of it. He said that his mind is inclined towards an international court formed of judiciary men making world decisions, rather than leaving decisions to a legislative assembly dependent on votes. A World Court would approach questions from a different angle, judging them on equity. I believe there's sound sense here. Even at the worst period, most Axis countries have had a few judges, at all events, who preserved their integrity and put justice, impartial justice, before their dictators' views.

These United States courts are infinitely more comfortable than ours. The judge can almost lie back in his chair—one whom I watched had his feet as high as his head; of another, I could see only his face. The witness sits in a chair and swings to and fro in immense comfort. The cross-examining lawyer stands at a tall square desk, but he walks to and fro, if he wishes, while haranguing the jury. Jurors may be six or twelve—having six is cheaper, half-price. They draw  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars a day.

In the Federal judge's court, emblazoned on the wall over the judges' chairs are the words: "Reason is the soul of justice." Two crossed Stars and Stripes are below.

In the District Court stands a blackboard on which, picked out in white letters, is the judge's name and also the list of cases down for trial. These district judges get 5,000 dollars



a year. One wonders whether, in this country of high salaries, that is enough to ensure high quality and strict integrity.

Lunched with eight or ten editors, journalists, radio-men, and artists. I asked about the betterment of Anglo-American relations. One editor said: "One tough thing is that anti-British feeling is so often linked with anti-Semitism, or anti-Communism—you can't get it standing alone. I've a friend who is very bitterly anti-British. I've asked him a score of times why, but he can never tell me. But it's in him, nevertheless." He added that what he himself is most afraid of is American Big Business doing a deal with German Big Business.

All these men were most cordial—all were agreed that the past twelve months has seen much improvement in our relationship. But we're not out of the wood. Our enemies are very active; and there are others, such as (said the editor) the "Peace Now" group, who do much damage. He said: "I've received this week the most violent anti-Semitic document I've ever seen—no name on the document, of course."

Another view: "Colorado Springs is very anti-British. A lot of retired people live there, wealthy folk. They're frightened Britain is going Red."

Yet another: "Your Consul ought to have authority to reply at once to damaging statements put out in Press or radio. No use trying to catch up weeks later. To do it, he must be extremely well-informed with the facts. A case in point was Senator Wheeler saying that 73 per cent. of the new invading force will be Yanks. American H.Q. ought to have replied instantly. They didn't. That story is still going round. I was at a party the other day. Ten women talked of nothing else."

*February 3rd, 1944.*

Mr. Allen True, a mural painter who formerly worked with Sir Frank Brangwyn, took me round to the Bureau of Reclamation—a department which builds some of the great dams which aid irrigation and provide power. I saw a map of California showing how Nature's water supplies by means of dams and pumps have been taken to parts where no water was, or insufficient water—water taken 500 miles. "Here," said the official, "is a countryside in California that could support more people than all Italy. To-day, California has some eight million people. It could eventually take, perhaps,

fifty millions. In due time it may be America's most populous state."

The Boulder Dam, nearly 800 feet up, produces power supplying half California. Mr. True regretted he is not a writer, for, he said, there is a story on that Boulder Dam that should be told—the story of a dog called Nig, a jet-black mongrel. Nig lost his master, who worked on the Dam, and during the four years that followed, Nig searched all the workings for his master—searched all day and every day; rose in the morning like a workman, had his dinner put up in a small basket, took his basket on the bus to the Dam, went down one elevator and up another, placed his basket with the workmen's baskets and then began his search of the Dam, and its manifold workings for his lost master. The dog searched till lunchtime, heard the buzzer, went for his dinner, had his basket opened for him, ate, and, like a workman, began work again after lunch and searched throughout the afternoon. In the evenings he'd go to the pool-rooms, and you'd see him standing with his paws on a table, watching the balls played, and the players would walk round him so that he could keep on standing where he wanted. Everybody knew him, but he never became devoted to anybody else. For four long years he searched. Alas! he was killed at last—a truck ran over him. A slab of stone stands over the grave with the word "Nig" cut into it half an inch deep, a tribute to a love that never faltered.

This making of dams in America isn't ended—not by any means. California will have thirty more dams of varying sizes before the work is done. Colorado will have some others, too. Nor is the Tennessee Valley Authority's work finished. The resources of the United States are not exploited to the full yet. But then they're not in England, either. Man gets on but slowly.

I was guest at lunch of the Cactus Club, a club of writers, doctors, lawyers. One of them, Dr. Mason, painted my throat inside, for I was awake half the night with it. This old room was a barn before it was a club. A piece of the barn-door hangs on the wall, and on it I wrote my name, one among hundreds. We drank beer from tankards, and club members acted as waiters. A fine friendliness and warmth.

Denver has a store of gold—maybe the third largest in all the world, gold in bricks and coin. Denver has a mint.

Not many, however, of Colorado's gold and silver mines are being worked—the U.S. War Production Board has shut them

down because gold and silver are no longer important. What a fall is there! Copper, zinc, lead, tin—*these* are what matter to-day. If gold or silver mines are being worked, it is only because the precious metals contain some copper or zinc—their humdrum sisters, now elevated into the aristocracy.

Relations between capital and labour are mixed in Colorado, as elsewhere. America has about thirteen millions of workers organised in trade unions, and forty-seven millions not organised. The lumber and oil industries have been partially organised, agriculture much less so. In the mining industry, organisation began in the 'nineties. If you read the minutes of a mining union of about 1895 you may find an entry: "Resolved that we don't work for less than a dollar a day." The next week there's another entry: "Resolved that a visit be paid to X. mine and if Bill Smith and Jim Johnson are working for less than a dollar a day, resolved they be run out of the camp to a distance of at least fifteen miles." In those early days employers smashed unions by driving miners out and across the mountains; on one occasion miners were driven forth in night-shirts and bare feet. It is only five years since a group of miners put up a barricade, stationed riflemen at it, felled a tree and prepared to kill two bus-loads of "scabs" being brought in to break a strike. As it happened, the bus-loads never penetrated that far, so the shooting didn't begin.

Many folk expect there'll be great ructions after this war between capital and labour.

To dinner by taxi-cab. Cabs are difficult to get, and I joined with several others; took me over half an hour to do a seven minutes' journey. My last companion told me he'd been speculating in shares in a mine producing molybdenum. This mine is at Climax, 11,000 feet up in the Rockies. The name fits, for, he said, shares which had lain in attics and were thought worthless had now made fortunes—1 dollar had become worth 4,000 dollars; for molybdenum is used in making hard steels. I asked a reliable observer if this sounded to him incredible. He answered: "Nothing is incredible in this country."

Dined with a banker, editor, poet, scientist. The poet said that he's very afraid that America is going to go rabidly imperialistic—a swing back to the mood of the Cuban War. "We've not had a Huey Long busy on this subject yet. When we do . . . a real demagogue might sweep the country. This

country is only just realising what it can do in the industrial field, only just realising its strength, its power, its potentialities. If it starts going down the wrong road . . ." Two or three others agreed, but not all. An Englishman said: "That would be contrary to your idealism and your being anti-Empire." He thought the danger exaggerated. Another editor spoke of the anti-liberal side of the administration. He's published a letter from a soldier on a domestic subject, and has been threatened by the Federal Bureau of Investigation because he won't divulge the soldier's name. Many of the journalists I meet complain vigorously of the illiberal censorship, of the clamping down on stuff that doesn't imperil security, of the administration's behaviour in withholding truth and treating the community as though they were children.

On American imperialism, this thought crosses my mind, that huge elements in this nation have had no training whatever in democracy—they come from countries still somewhat barbaric where might is right.

The other fear expressed to me by liberal-minded men is that of the nation becoming military-minded and its soldiers and sailors and airmen returning from the wars imbued with something close to Fascism. A writer in St. Louis said to me: "I've got two sons in the Army, and I dislike very much the notions going into their heads." My heart goes out to the men risking their lives, but they are not necessarily filled with political wisdom.

Those who genuinely think this is God's own country—and they have reason for thinking so—might well believe it would be for the world's benefit that the United States should control it—a United States of the World. I was asked if Lord Halifax had this possible development of American thought in mind when he spoke recently of the need for the British Commonwealth moving towards centralisation rather than the reverse.

Denver has a system of penny-in-the-slot car parking. Along the kerb at intervals there stand iron rods a yard high, topped with a small clock. You drop a coin in, and that coin turns the finger showing how many minutes you may park. At the end of that period the finger drops, so that a policeman, walking by, can see at a glance if you've overstayed your time—in which case he fixes a ticket on your car and you must report within the ensuing forty-eight hours at the local police court. This court is run on the cafeteria system—clerks attend to you, assess the fine and you pay it. I walked along the street with

a middle-aged lawyer, a kindly soul who, seeing a car had overstayed its time and that a policeman approached, dropped a coin in the clock and saved some unknown citizen a dollar fine! Now, how my Jonathan North would have delighted to outwit the Bobbies by employing an urchin to run along dropping pennies in!

Americans drink coffee with their meat; they do not wait, as we do, till the meal is almost ended. I had understood that drinking coffee with meat would turn that meat into leather, but there's no sign that the Americans are acute sufferers from indigestion. Quite the contrary.

*February 4th, 1944.*

This morning Mrs. Stevens, the British Consul's wife, who has the gift of mimicry and is a delightful companion, drove me to look at Central City, a small township in the Rockies forty miles out and 8,497 feet up. Central City is known as a ghost city, being the ghost of its former self, but I observe that the 700 folk still dwelling there complain vigorously of being nicknamed thus—complain about as effectively as Canute bade the tide go back. This old township—and yet it's fairly new, for its origin was 1859, when a man named John Gregory struck the first gold—sprawls along a winding, climbing street, along various gulches and across the hillside, rather as a Welsh mining village does. Here and there dwellings are perched precariously, as though pigeons or eagles had built them. Here is a tenement with rickety wooden stairs climbing the outside of it, yonder is one with salmon-coloured chubby spires let into the roof. These dwellings, churches, hotels—"Grubstake Inn" is one—cry out for the pen of a Brangwyn or a Muirhead Bone, or for the brush of a landscape painter, for the hillsides are tawny and the sky is steel-blue to-day. Even lower down the winding valley we had come upon deserted outcrops where the brown or red earth had been turned up and left as though a giant dog had been burying a bone there; skeletons of motor-cars lay about, and what's left of a pit-head gear—a tiny thing 20 or 30 feet high. In Central City some pavements are fashioned of wood, as they were in days when men got rich fast and fired their revolvers in salute, and when the Teller House Hotel, into which we went for a moment, was the only hotel in the place with anything but hay beds. Those were the days when President Grant came to the city—1873—and the sidewalk, for his benefit, was paved with silver bricks to the value of 12,000 dollars. The

hotel had announced with a flourish on its being opened that each door had a patent lock which could not by any possibility be unlocked from outside, and that "guests might therefore lie down in peaceful slumbers, undisturbed by apprehension of getting their heads blown off." The local newspaper reported that after the inaugural ball, festivities went on till daylight, whereupon "the large assembly retired in good order"—doubtless like an army after battle.

Gilpin County, where Central City is, has been in its time the most important gold area of Colorado—has unearthed 125 million dollars' worth of metal. In the early days the most primitive sluicing was enough to win the ore. Black Hawk is another neighbour which turned the poverty-stricken into rich men, so that to-day there live in Denver families whose fortunes were won on these rugged hills. To Nevadaville, which has the county's deepest mine, 2,200 feet, came Cornishmen and Irishmen as famed for singing as for bloody fights. The town had sixteen saloons and every one was a dance hall and a battlefield also. How far these same gentlemen were responsible for giving the neighbourhood an opera house I don't know, but within twenty years of the first gold being washed, Central City had an opera house wherein a hundred gas jets flared. The days of riches are gone, the days when water was dragged in barrels and sold for 50 cents a barrel are gone, the days when houses were scarce as saints are gone—Mrs. Stevens was offered a house outright the other day for 32 dollars, though she's not sure how much roof it boasted.

I met an old Methodist minister this afternoon who reminded me that America has 10,000,000 of his people, and that the Methodist bishops recently passed a resolution against isolationism. When this minister had his first "cure" not far from Denver, his parishioners could barely understand his English accent. Some time later his housekeeper told him, "You don't speak so broken as you did."

Talking to an editor who's striving to give his paper a liberal outlook, I congratulated him, for, I said, if we writers are not liberal, what hope is there? The wrong 'uns will always twist our words if we give 'em the slightest loophole and summon us as supporting witnesses for their own intolerance; so that we had better be even a trifle more liberal than we sometimes feel like being.

He is disturbed at the reckless statements being made on the buying of land by Japanese aliens. Feeling is stirred up.

I took train to-night for Portland, Oregon. At my dining table was a handsome boy, a second lieutenant in the American Artillery who was a student at New College, Oxford; said he's only just beginning to know how much he enjoyed that; told me how disillusioned and bored some of his English friends then were: "They'd take a long time dressing because, they said, they had time to waste—didn't know what to do with it." He asked how they were now. I said I thought a lot of our lads are not thinking much of post-war because they can't see that far ahead—if you're going to Berlin on a raid to-night it's not much use worrying over 1945, but that, on the other hand, we have some 60,000 men in the armed forces—mainly soldiers—who are studying hard. He spoke of the training the American Army is giving its men in current events, and seemed pleased with it—the first man I've met who is. He thinks America's war effort could be greater, asked me how it looks to me and seemed a trifle apprehensive of my reply. I said: "It seems impossible for human beings to care enough unless they're punched on the jaw. We British didn't care enough about China, Ethiopia, Spain. So with you now—the war's too far off. I imagine that if we were in your shoes we should act as you do, and if you were in ours, you'd be like us."

I talked also with the mother of an American soldier now in England—a clever boy who writes well. Looking at America from England, he's disgusted with America (she said), at her war attitude, at her attitude to Roosevelt. He throws up his hands in horror at English plumbing, but asks: "What does plumbing matter, anyhow? What do America's material comforts matter? England gets along without them." She herself was very afraid America would slide back into isolationism, though it wouldn't be called by that name.

When Lord Halifax passed through Cheyenne, his boy was with him who lost both legs in the North African fighting. A manservant who looks after him is nicknamed "The Eighth Army."

Halifax has never spoken in public of his losses, one boy killed and another maimed. This fact has done him much good in America.

"Which state are we in?" I asked.

"Idaho—we'll be in Idaho all day."

The fields were thick with snow this morning, but by 2 p.m. the snow had almost gone and the horizon was dark purple

with low hills. In the far distance a peak was white with a pale gold sky above it. The countryside is almost treeless, as it was when running towards Cheyenne from Denver. In that region the trees I saw had been imported, and some of them were bent as though in grief at their new habitation.

The earth was now the colour of an old grey elephant, gnarled, and sprouting bristles. We were climbing, train speed down at times to fifteen miles an hour, and ears inclined to pop. When the train stopped at a station for ten to twenty minutes, our Negro porters stood on the track with a small metal foot-stool painted yellow for us to step on. No lunch on this train—just breakfast and dinner, but at 2.30 we got a sandwich at a wayside station—sandwiches ready cut and wrapped in cellophane.

Near Caldwell were flocks of wildfowl, cows standing or lying in marshy land, and some houses that were broken shacks. This looked a morsel of America's poor farming land, for the United States has poverty as well as riches. Occasionally, one sees a shack and a pigsty and, beside it, as if it had dropped from a different world, a modern motor-car.

I asked for an Old Fashioned before dinner, but this is banned. Oregon is dry—only bottled beer to be had, and not that with food—only in the club car. In Portland city members of clubs have their personal lockers stocked with whisky, gin, etc. The allowance is a bottle of whisky a month. "Little chance of a drink between here and Chicago," somebody growls to me.

Portland city in February is mild and damp, and the grass is green—a touch of England on the Pacific; and a touch of England in many of the people, too, but a conservative, moneyed and propertied England, disliking Roosevelt's New Deal. Out to tea, where a High Church parson, called "Father," showed us his 16 mm. movies in technicolour of Crater Lake, the Pacific coast, Hood Mountain, and of winter skiing and summer's lovely gardens. Oregon is a very lovely state—Switzerland, *California and the English Lakes*, all seem to be here.

Controversy is lively over Hitchcock's picture, *Lifeboat*; Dorothy Thompson attacks it on the ground that it makes the U-boat captain a more attractive character than the Americans. The writer was John Steinbeck. Now in Steinbeck's *The Moon*



is *Down* he was objective about the enemy, whom he didn't call Germans, but who obviously *were* Germans. He showed how the rot entered into them because of the semi-passive defence of the invaded, and because of their own fear of being slain in the dark. But, in a sense, the Germans were decent—as decent as Englishmen or Americans under the same conditions. It may be that in *Lifeboat* he has deliberately refused to pander to hatred of Germans, and has perhaps swung a trifle too far in the other direction. I'm not sure. But an artist's first duty is to himself and his own soul. The day will come when the world will look with dislike on its fall into the abyss of hatred during this war.

A shrewd man who knows America well shares my view that we use too much flattery in our approach to this country. He said, "We're building up a tremendous debit balance which will hamper us a lot in future relations, and especially post-war relations." He has a good many friends who at bottom are rather anti-British; he feels that all that can be done is to rely on influencing them almost imperceptibly, letting fall telling facts when opportunity offers.

Portland's population has risen by about 50 per cent. during the war. In a few odd cases as much as 450 dollars a month is being paid for a furnished house. I was told: "I've a friend who paid 14,000 dollars for his house. Somebody wanted to buy it. What was his price? He said it was 21,000 dollars, and thought no more of it, regarding that figure as extravagant. But next day he found a note on his table saying: 'You no longer live here,' and enclosing the first payment on 21,000 dollars. And he sold—and he's had to pay 25,000 dollars to get another house!"

A R.N. commander reminds me of the story of the naval officer who sent a signal to the Commander-in-Chief pointing out his situation was pretty desperate. To the signal he added, "Repeat to God"—this being the common formula for sending copies of messages to others whom it is proper to inform.

*February 8th, 1944.*

After being interviewed on the radio this morning—having no script certainly produces spontaneity—I went to look at a Woolworth aircraft carrier being built here for our Navy. It has a soda-fountain like a drug-store, will carry a small

tractor (for towing aircraft up the sloping deck) and also a jeep. The wardroom is grim-looking—not a couch in it, not an easy chair. A R.N. commander said: "Wardroom life doesn't appear to exist in the American Navy to the degree that it does in ours. Their ships are dry." Sometimes our own men drink too much, but the notion of a dry ship is, to me, appalling; men need a little relaxation. American titles for rooms and instruments are used, and our own words are being placed beneath, as though American and English are two different tongues—as in some ways they are.

At the door of the dock appears:

*What you see,  
What you hear,  
When you leave,  
Leave it here.*

American workmen dress picturesquely: plaid hunting jackets, hats of all shapes—green hats, red hats—jackets with a rash of zip fasteners, brown leather and white leather jackets, knee boots occasionally; altogether a touch of the Wild West or a touch of holiday about them. Boyish. They often wear steel or metal hats in the yards as protection against stuff falling. Some of these hats shine like silver, but most are dully grey, and the newest are of fabric instead of metal.

This opinion was given to me: "Moneyed people in the States take little part in public life either in war or peace. A lot of young wealthy men are walking about in uniform, but with safe jobs—a host of commissions were given early on. Similarly, you get young men in uniform going to universities and colleges for courses lasting two years.

"I would say that 70 per cent. of Portland people are untouched by the war, and will remain untouched.

"They growl here that there's lots of meat in Canada, that Canada isn't rationed as Portland is." (True, I am no great trencherman, but the portions of meat served to me are twice too big.)

A second opinion: "America has three times been saved by disasters—by the Japanese earthquake, which made a lot of work for U.S.A., by the last war and by this war. As long ago as 1938 America began to be busy making war stuff. It was British ship orders that started Kaiser on his shipbuilding. Remember that in the slump American unemployed rose to 10 per cent. in 1929."

I am often asked whether I'm Canadian or English.

February 9th, 1944.

This morning, to a shipbuilding yard of Henry Kaiser, this sixty-one-year-old man who began life as a photographer in Florida, and to-day employs in building ships, aircraft, making concrete, etc., about 250,000 men. This shipbuilding is done with Government money.

The woman who drove the car was a typical American, beautifully turned out—uniform of light-blue jacket and short skirt, white blouse, and a light-blue cap with U.S.M.C. figured on the front (United States Maritime Commission). She had auburn hair, face delicately painted, and finger-nails dark red. She is married and a mother of children, but she had the gaiety of a girl of twenty. She said she came from Denver, and she thought Denver the swellest place in the world—in Denver everybody just spoke to cverybody else, but here in Portland, gee! pcople seemed to think you needed a written invitation to tea and you had to be introduced before you spoke. She'd been up till 11.45 p.m. the night before ironing her blouses; she thought uniforms swell, because then the girls didn't get jealous of one another over clothes. We now picked up one or two others, and she introduced us all round. She drove very well, and as she drove, she told how the first time she crossed a certain bridge a siren blew. She thought that siren was an air raid warning and, gee! when that happened she just had to grab somebody, and she grabbed the man sitting alongside and nearly made his leg blue, she gripped it so hard. When she found it wasn't an air raid, she nearly died of shame—she was crimson for hours. I hope this doesn't sound as though I'm being satirical. She was a charming person, friendly and pleasant, and natural to a degree that English women rarely achieve.

Where the 200 acres of this yard stand was swamp in February, 1941. By the end of that year the yard was turning out ships, and this month has produced its three-hundred-and-thirtieth. A time came when Liberty ships were assembled in twenty-four days—a few in as little as ten days. For a brief time the rate was 2.1 ships a day. Now they've begun to build Victory ships—the first one named *United Victory*. *United Victory* was fifty-four days on the ways, but they assert that inside three months they'll have that time cut down very considerably.

What are the secrets? I should say they are unlimited material, unlimited man-power, unlimited space, and prefabrication—that is to say, building parts of the ship in several other states, fitting them together here, and then lifting the parts into position. On the Victory ships they lift the deckhouse into position in one piece, and the deckhouse weighs 73 tons, measuring 82½ feet long, 15 feet high and 40 feet wide.

By the way, the Victory ships will sail at 15 knots plus, as against the Liberty ships' 11 knots plus. The newer ones have a finer shaped bow, more shapely, less straight and blunt. It's as though we can now take a breather and make a lovelier ship.

We stopped to talk to a group of men. The average pay of a "day-shifter" is 62.40 dollars a week—in English money, £15 10s. Of that he pays about 5.80 dollars in income tax, and buys 6.25 dollars of War Bonds. His rent averages 10 dollars a week. Within the yard are barracks for single men. Such a man gets board and lodging for 15.25 dollars a week. He could therefore, were he really thrifty, save (including his War Bonds) 30 to 40 dollars a week.

Work goes on round the clock, the ships lit by lamps at night. The "graveyard shift" begins about 1.30 a.m. and runs seven hours. For that shift they receive eight hours' pay plus 15 per cent. extra bonus. The "swing shift"—late afternoon and evening—draws 10 per cent. extra. Moreover, every seventh man is a "lead-man," earning 73 dollars a week, and every twentieth is a foreman, earning 94 dollars. Even in America this is a good deal of money. And none works more than forty-eight hours a week.

I could imagine an English manager thinking this yard has a superfluity of men. For eleven "ways" they have 30,000 work-people, about a fifth of whom are women. I saw women mixed up with men doing welding—some were distinguished only with difficulty; other women are driving 15-ton cranes perched 60 feet high. If they do men's work, they draw men's pay. None earns below 95 cents an hour. I met a middle-aged woman of fifty-eight sweeping up on a ship—an educated woman with a soldier son in England. She is driven here in her brother's car; they travel ninety-four miles to and fro each day, rising at 6.30 a.m. and getting home at 7.15 p.m. when the car runs well. She draws 49 dollars a week, and though I admire greatly what she's doing, I can't believe she is worth the money. (There are women of seventy earning this money this way.) That ship she was working on was thronged with workpeople—800 to

1,000 of them. The ship is launched, and painting, wiring and a multitude of finishing tasks are being done. The workers struck me as falling over one another, and threes and fours stood about chatting. But, of course, I am no expert. An official surveyor on board agreed with me, however. Maybe we're both old-fashioned—I don't know. He was a Scot, and he didn't like all this welding, either. (British ships are usually riveted ships, and one of ours of equal size would have 900,000 rivets. But then, we do not approach the Americans in speed of turning the ships out.)

I talked to another old Scot in charge of crection. He has 3,000 men under him of all nations—English, Greeks, Norwegians, almost every race under the sun. I asked how he gets along with this agglomeration. He said: "Niver think of it—all the same to us—all Americans." He's been in U.S.A. for twenty years—thinks Americans quicker in the uptake. "Now I've got two boys helpin' me—lads about thirty—they'd niver seen a ship—they'd worked on concrete dams or the like o' that. But they're my assistants noo—I could trust 'em with annything." As for Henry Kaiser—oh, he was a go-getter. "If he says he wants a ship launched on the tenth o' the month he doesn't ask how—it juist has to be done, and it gets done, too." There the old Scot was, talking his Doric, sending for blue prints and files and figures to show me what I wanted, using the American gadgets as if born to them—talking Doric, but proud of being an American. This is one of the most hopeful things in the world to-day, that all these men work together without being conscious of being different. There are Negroes in this yard—not many—perhaps 150 of them, getting along well. I asked about the launching—is there a ceremony? The answer is: "Yes." Often a department whose purchase of War Bonds is the highest that week has the choice. "The names are put in a hat and one is drawn out. Once it came to a Negro janitress. She it was launched the ship, cracked the bottle of champagne, and had her guests invited to the lunch. Her Negro husband made the speech at the launching."

Check by jowl lie those eleven "ways" in a row with just enough room in between for the heavy cranes to work. Towards them powerful tractors were tugging the steel parts—perhaps a piece of the curved bottom weighing 60 tons or a lump of the straighter side. One vehicle is like a tractor on stilts—a "hyster" copied from a lumber yard, high enough to straddle the object it is handling. This is the stamp of it, the American way of improvising.

I climbed over a bed of steel plates. On one was welded in relief—"Tojo! What a world!" What indeed! Women sat about or lay on those plates wearing box-masks giving them a Robot or Frankenstein look. Anon, they would throw the mask back so that it stood aloft on their heads like a mechanical version of an Elizabethan headdress. The blue flames spurted, the clanging went on, the 95-h.p. Diesel tractors lugged the chunks of ship to and fro—and somebody told me how a foreman growled at a workman for not wearing his steel helmet when under a 30-ton lump of metal—as if a steel hat would have saved him. I saw chalked up aloft words like "High-ball Billie" and "Montana sheepdogs," learned how workmen come in sixty miles daily by bus, saw how this yard is still being extended—dredging goes on, swamps are still filled in, railway line laid down. I went along to the shipyard nursery, where 300 children can be left while parents work. Eighty-six children were there to-day—youngsters from sixteen months to nine or ten: reminds me of nursery schools I once saw in Vienna. But alas! some parents coming off shift past midnight wake up their children and cart them off home.

These Kaiser shipbuilding yards—which are almost as well known as our Eighth Army—have their fortnightly magazine. The management gives monthly prizes for inventions or new methods of saving time and labour. Very few workers built ships pre-war, yet at Oregon yard 22 per cent. of suggestions are accepted. Men who were hairdressers, salesmen and farmers are puzzling their brains how to build ships faster. A fight is being made to cut down accidents. The remarkable fact is that the death-rate on the war industry front was still, in January, 1944, four times higher than on the nation's battlefronts.

This Oregon yard reached its peak of employment—34,144—last July, and by December had fallen to 32,575. The three Kaiser shipyards here paid in wages in 1943 more than all Portland's workers combined had earned in the previous sixteen years. To the three yards there drive each day 13,600 private motor-cars.

Shipyard workers are apparently like soldiers—they'll believe anything. One rumour that has to be repeatedly denied is that welding with the welding arc causes sterility—prevents people from having children. Twice the journal has had to print a doctor's denial. Nor are the workers free from slacking. A welder writes to the journal saying that he asked each of six welders who were all idle at that moment to tack for him. Each said he was waiting for the lead-man and each sat there

for one hour forty-five minutes doing nothing. Another wasteful act is the making of rings, bracelets and key-rings from stainless, or chrome-nickel welding rod—done in the firm's time.

Among the curious characters in the yard are a woman blacksmith, and a shipfitter named Sport Mathews, who once earned his living by performing on a pole 122 feet high. He has at one time or another broken fifty-six bones in his body and to-day wears two silver plates in his legs and two others in his head. The youngest lead-woman is Miriam Olsen, aged only seventeen. At school she edited the school newspaper, and intends to enter Washington University to pursue journalism. A woman named Lullo Matzen wires the navigation lights on the 50-foot masts.

Of the future of these shipyards, Rear-Admiral Howard L. Vickery, in launching the *Saginaw Bay* in January, 1944, said that the 18,500,000 tons of shipping planned for this year would need more man-hours than the nineteen million tons last year, because types will be far more complicated. Edgar Kaiser, launching the first of the Victory ships, said that one of them with its high speed would do the work of three Liberty ships. (This sounds a playful exaggeration.) Nor would she need destroyers or carrier-based planes to guard her. Speaking in September, 1943, he said: "Much that we read about our merchant marine is that it must not die after World War II, and that we of the U.S. must take our place in the merchant shipping of the world. How can we do it? Not with a preponderous proportion of slow cargo tonnage, not with ships that have to be subsidised by the Government. We can do it by the right of free competition and doing it just a little cheaper than the other fellow."

I continue to run into strange little tales about the China-Japanese war. There was a slight contretemps recently about trucks being given by the British to the Chinese. The trucks were marshalled in a compound. But the Americans turned up and said they were *their* trucks—Lend-Lease stuff—and they needed them; so they drove a lorry across the entrance to the compound blocking it. The Chinese were unperturbed. They now demanded fabulous sums from the Americans as payment for the American trucks—money would solve the problem, they said!

The point about all these serio-comic tales of China is that it's no use our Western minds trying to grapple with the tortuous Chinese reasoning or morality. I talked at length last night with a man who lived and worked long years in China. He said, among other things: "I've been thinking of titles for

a book" (he's something of a humorist and ironist), "and it occurred to me that 'Oil for the Palms of China' wouldn't be a bad one, or 'Wits sharper than Bayonets.' At wit and subtlety, the Japs are as children compared with the Chinese. After all, the Chinese have had about 2,000 years' more experience. The Chinese will certainly beat the Japs in fifty years—but, unfortunately, we can't wait that long." He believes the Chinese hold down a Jap army of, say, 350,000 men, but the Japs use the war in China as cheap training for their men in the way that we train our commandos in Kent, England! He's got considerable affection and admiration for the Chinese—says that in air raids and so forth they have stores of poise and equanimity transcending our own. The Chinese manager of a foundry said, speaking of air raids: "Well, it gives the men practice in starting and stopping the machinery." A Japanese soldier wandered into a group of Chinese. "So you are a Jap, eh?" they said. And then the next logical question: "And how many more are there of you? Indeed!" (for there were quite a lot behind). So the conversation remained on an amicable level. After all, what was the use of quarrelling with so many—far too many?

*February 10th, 1944.*

A Republican businessman came to breakfast. He used a description of Mr. Roosevelt that I had heard used in London of Winston—"as an administrator, not worth a nickel." I said during our talk: "What would be the use of having an immaculate America within its own borders, if, like a spanking motor-car heading down the wrong road, it was rushing to the abyss?" To which he countered: "What would be the good of going down the right road if the car were falling to pieces and finally couldn't move at all?" I said: "It would never be quite so bad as that—you can always get in mechanics. Roosevelt may not know how the engine works, but he can employ somebody who does."

This Republican, a man of broad outlook and, I should judge, of liberal mind, said he believes that whereas in the old war only 5 per cent. of the American Army was of college or high school education, to-day the percentage is over 50, so that you cannot stop them thinking politically. (I had said I doubted if America wants its soldiers to think politically.)

For two years he had in his home two young sons of an English general, but he got them back to England at the end of that time because he thought they would suffer in mind if they didn't share England's experience of war. For the same



reason, a woman relative, married to an Englishman, has just left for Britain. I said I thought this wise, but that he need not be apprehensive as to how English people would regard those who had been out of England—that public memory, and private memory also, is short; once the war is over, few will trouble to remember who has been where.

Last night I saw Charles Laughton's new picture, *The Man from Down Under*—a character addicted to fights, brawls, boasting, lying, and drinking, but a good-hearted and brave man. An indifferent picture as a picture, disursive and muddled. This is a dry state, and I wondered how the drinking strikes Americans—a few walked out during the showing. There's a sense in which every film and every Englishman here is an ambassador doing us good or ill. I don't think that picture will do us much good, though I should be the last to want to stop it, since there must be freedom of expression, no matter what that expression is.

It occurs to me that I seldom hear Americans curse or swear. The use of "bloody" and "hell," common with us, seems not to exist. Nor have I observed any prostitutes touting for custom. A woman professor tells me Americans use "God-awful" a good deal—one of their classes of students was called "The God-awfuls" because their teacher used the phrase so often.

I saw *North Star* too, Samuel Goldwyn's film on Russia, a Hollywood Russia. Much too emotional, and sloppy over children, as Laughton's picture is sloppy over the Catholic Church. There can be that in American pictures which, to me, is nauseating—the idolatry of children for one thing, and the portrayal of bedecked brides and beflowered and beflagged coffins and folk bowed in grief for another. I'm sometimes tempted to think that if New York or Los Angeles had been bombed as London was, some folk would have worn *crêpe* for a hundred years.

This morning to Reed College to meet the Faculty and to speak to the assembly—about 150 girls and youths of eighteen to twenty, with a sprinkling of their professors and teachers. The college's normal roll is down by 200, but of late a similar number of air cadets have been under tuition. An interesting story is told on this. The U.S. Government decided they needed 800 young men trained as meteorologists, but other officials thought this number too modest, so they doubled it, and the number was again redoubled and enlarged till it rose from 800

to 8,000. Reed College's 200 air cadets were among them. But after a year's course the mistake was discovered, so these 200 are now to be all kinds of officers, but none are to be meteorologists. These Reed students have done very well, and they're of all origins. One topped the whole United States—a Greek, Demopoulos. Two students are Chinese, one is a Negro. Their tutor said to me, as numerous teachers have said: "There are very able boys in all nations and duds in all nations. No nation can be said to be better than another."

A small organ played as we walked in to assembly. I said that in my view America is man's most hopeful experiment, but neither Americans nor we English have managed yet to banish poverty and slums and feed all our people adequately. I said the test for our working together and our need to work together is not whether we love one another in every particular, but whether we find ourselves inevitably, under the stress of world events, collaborating together. I said that freedom to discuss as we were doing had only been achieved by fighting for it, and would be lost did we not cherish the privilege and, if need be, fight to maintain it; that maybe we had no right to expect safety and that the only things certain are change and danger; that, as no man liveth to himself, no nation liveth to itself, either—and that the world cannot be made safe for any one democracy or any one nation—not even America. I said some other things—gave them our casualty figures, told them we are grateful to U.S.A. and to Russia and China, and that I hoped people were a little grateful to Britain too, since we had only got to this point in the war by standing together and each doing what we can.

Questions were many—among them, what did we in England think of American foreign policy? I said I spoke only for myself, but that some of us regarded it as mysterious (great laughter) and looked with disfavour on flirtations with Darlan and Badoglio, but that I didn't know how far our British Foreign Office or the American State Department was the true nigger in the woodpile. I was asked about strikes, and spoke in reply about needing to narrow the gulf between soldiers and workers at home, and to see that not all strikes were necessarily bad or vicious, since some might be resorted to in protest against employers trying to whittle away what had been achieved only by a long struggle on the part of workers; this was especially well received, and several came up afterwards to say: "That should be said every day." I was asked how we English would regard a change of President. I said that

I myself would regard it as all right if the President's foreign policy was all right, but that if his foreign policy were to withdraw into isolation or think America could live by itself alone, then that, in my view, would be a disaster for me and for them also in the long run.

Over lunch I was asked about the influence of our Catholics on British policy. I replied that I might be mistaken in my view, but that I did not look on them in England as being a section of the community apart from the rest, and that we British were anyhow predominantly a Protestant country. I was next asked were we alive to the Fascist danger in South America? I replied: "We are not half alive enough." I asked whether this Pacific Coast is isolationist. The consensus of views was that the Far West is more liberal-minded than the Middle West, and immensely better than it was a year ago. Another private question was how we in England look on the men who fought in Spain with the Republicans. I said those of us on the Left look on them as in the nature of heroes, rather than otherwise. He asked: "Were they discriminated against by the Government?" I said I thought not—that a friend of mine who fought in Spain is now a flight-lieutenant in the R.A.F. The professor questioning me said: "Gosh! That's fine. Here that would never happen. The F.B.I. would see that they were put into work gangs—and not allowed in the armed forces or overseas. The State Department calls such men, 'Premature anti-Fascists.'"

Reed College regards itself as a liberal-minded college, I think, with justice. Nobody could wish for a quicker, livelier, or more appreciative audience. Over lunch a teacher said: "Look here, I've got a lot of air cadets—half of them bitterly isolationist. Would you speak to them? Some are tough—I hope they'll be decent when you're there." So after lunch I went to them, and told them to be as blunt as they wished, and I would, if they didn't mind, be frank in reply. I didn't find them too blunt or at all unpleasant. Were we going to maintain our imperialistic policy in the Far East? What about Russia and Poland? What about strikes—did we have any in England? Only one boy had a scowl on his face as I walked out.

Among reasons adduced for anti-British feeling is the difference in accent—an English accent is often thought affected and high-hat! I said there is something to be said on the other side—that some of us don't like crooning. But I said Bob Hope, in my view, is far beyond our own radio comics.

A radio announcer said to me: "You sold us a bill of goods on war debts last time, and this time you sold us another on not wanting a single American soldier overseas. I hear people saying, when they talk over Senator Wheeler's statement that 73 per cent. of the invading force will be American, 'And I remember the time when the British said they only wanted weapons. We're being sold again as we were once before. Roosevelt said he'd never send a man on foreign soil. And look at this!' Well, all that doesn't do you any good." I said, "I'm all for telling the truth, and I always thought the phrase, 'Give us the tools and we'll finish the job,' was false. But let me ask you this—suppose we British had told you from the first that this was your war as much as ours—as it was—and that you'd have to come in with every soldier you could raise, and come over to Europe and get killed in your thousands, as you'll have to in all likelihood, what effect would that have had? Wouldn't you have run away from even selling us any weapons?" He said he didn't know, but repeated he was all in favour of the truth.

He raised another point. "Right up to Pearl Harbour," he said, "scrap iron and high octane spirit was being shipped from this port in boatloads to the Japanese." He was hot on Big Business. "One of our men tortured by the Japs said that worse than the tortures was the sight of lines of American trucks being used by the Japs, trucks made by General Motors, Ford and the rest of 'em."

The *Oregonian* (Republican newspaper) had a leader this morning poking fun in a sly way at soldiers voting. Two war writers at the front in Italy were quoted as saying the soldiers would think more of a dry cowed than a vote.

To-night I dined with a group keenly interested in foreign affairs, among them lawyers, financiers, bulb-growers, parsons, trade union leaders, journalists, radio-men. I spoke to them on trends in Britain, and asked them questions in return. What emerged was the mixture of views among them. A judge said that if we English—and it applied to the French and Dutch too—expected to run our colonies after the war as we did before, that would be a brake on America collaborating. Several of them wanted Churchill to clarify his statement saying that he was not in office to liquidate the British Empire—as it stands, they said, that remark has done us infinite harm; if he would broadcast to U.S.A. clearing up misconceptions and

misunderstandings about the British Commonwealth it would do much good. (I think this is true. The ignorance even among educated people on the subject of our Empire is abysmal—most of them don't know the difference between colonies and dominions—they think we still govern the lot.)

I asked what *they* think should be done with our Empire, but they didn't reply. They didn't quarrel with my statement that but for the British Commonwealth the war would have been lost and U.S.A. ultimately defeated. Several of them have a high regard for our Empire, and think we're right to stick to it. I do not meet anybody who suggests that Russia should part with anything or America or indeed, anybody else at all—only our noble selves. A Jewish lawyer said the Irish in America would rather Hitler won than that our Empire should remain undisturbed. He thinks the "Peace Now" group are financed by the Germans. A wealthy business man came to me afterwards to say privately that America won't sign any blue-prints on post-war collaboration—she'll agree to get round a table whenever it's necessary and discuss, but no more than that. I said: "What about an international police force?" He said: "Never. A police force, yes, but controlled by the various nations. And we'll have to occupy Germany and Japan, too, but we'll each have to make our contribution."

A trade union leader who was formerly a stevedore—quite a young man—said: "I'll tell you frankly, I was anti-British till I saw *Desert Victory*. I've been pro-British since then." He's busy shipping stuff to Russia, and asserts that Russia is very appreciative and feels warmly towards America.

Is it pure fancy on my part to imagine that part, at least, of America's anti-British feeling springs from a bad conscience?

A college teacher laments to me that American students are stuffed with technical knowledge—over-stuffed, perhaps, and that they've far too little work that compels them to think and reflect. Their essays, he says, are filled with ready-made thoughts, ideas and clichés, the result of movies and a radio that croons and jabbars through the hours. I confess that I sometimes feel that if a dictator were preparing a country for Fascism he could hardly do it better—so many bogus films sodden with sentimentality, a crooning radio, newspapers with horoscopes and ten or fifteen comic strips (on Sundays the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which is a good paper, advertises "More

than thirty complete comics"). The blanketing all-nation publications are journals such as *Life*, *Time*, and the *Readers' Digest*. He'd be a bold man who pretended they are markedly liberal of mind. Bookstalls hold a lot of high-coloured magazine-jackets which no bishop would approve. Sober and shrewd men speak to me of deep anti-Semitism just under the surface of life. But, of course, as severe an indictment, if not in the same terms, could be brought against almost every nation.

February 12th, 1944.

I awoke this morning in California, having travelled overnight from Portland—a bright morning with sun like an English June; a mountain on the horizon capped with snow, and other peaks with smoking clouds like pennants. A lovely morning making us glad. My couch had been the lower berth in the train corridor—you undress behind the curtain, stowing your belongings in a string hammock. You patter along the corridor to clean your teeth, men one way, women the other. It was close on 11 p.m. before my bed was made up by the Negro porter—an old gentleman—and it was nearly eleven this morning when he unmade it, so that I could sit in comfort again. The stumbling-block was the lady upstairs, who went to bed long after me and wouldn't get up this morning. Her lips are painted dark red, her face is plenteously coated in powder, and she wears a large artificial flower on her jacket. This morning an Italian-looking U.S. officer sat with her and was embarrassingly fond.

By noon we had rolled for hour after hour past flat, fertile fields, and now the earth turned green with hedgerows that might have been Kent, except that at intervals a sub-tropical palm stood straight to the sky. Outdoors the wind was keener than it looked—the Mid-West and New York have just been swept with blizzards and snow, and a touch of it reaches here, so that San Francisco has been having gales of winds. We rolled at last by the edge of a bay with muddy water bearing a cargo ship or two. On the far side land rose in what resembled mountainous islands. From Oakland, a little-known town of 500,000 people, we took ferry across two or three miles of harbour to San Francisco, sailing past a bridge very high, slender, modern and about as romantic as that at Charing Cross. A taxi-cab rushed up a street that rises about one in three and deposited me here—the driver giving me the wrong change—"here" being a hotel where my bedroom costs

7 dollars, and was, at 3.30 p.m., no beautiful sight—towels red with lipstick, ash-trays unemptied, beds in disarray. I rang down to growl about this and was told: "Every room in the hotel is in the same condition—the maid will be right along." Two hours later she came. I record this because it's the first time in America that I have run into anything of the sort.

California is part of the smiling, lavishly prospering America, and I'm ready to accept that San Francisco is the very fine city everybody has sworn it is. To-night I dined in Chinatown, no more than two or three blocks from this hotel—a Chinatown beautifully clean, with lots of Chinamen in U.S. uniforms in the streets—some of them officers. The ground floor was partitioned into wooden box compartments holding two, four or six people dining in private, a curtain over the door. In such a one we ate seaweed soup, and a dish compounded of almonds, chicken, and bamboo shoots. First was brought a jug of hot tea, and we drank tea throughout from small basins—an intensely sober and sobering proceeding. I was told (a) that San Francisco is the most expensive city in U.S.A., (b) that a drapery store here sells the costliest fabrics in the world, (c) that the wealthiest man in San Francisco started life selling newspapers in the streets, and (d) that a group of half a dozen men I am to lunch with are worth sixty or seventy million dollars. So that the phrase, "This is a dollar country," came as no surprise.

*February 13th, 1944.*

A brilliant morning. An aircraft white as a swan is in the blue sky. From my room I can catch glimpses of blue-grey sea, and red girders of the Golden Gate bridge. Grass is green as the backs at Cambridge. Difficult to know a war rages.

I asked a well-to-do Republican woman why she hates Roosevelt so much—didn't he go into office when America was in the doldrums with eight million unemployed, and isn't America prosperous to-day—albeit with a false prosperity and half the war contracts in half a dozen big hands? Wherein has he so grievously sinned? She said that he had slaughtered hogs and ploughed in wheat. She repeated this several times, and became almost incoherent with rage. I said that if he had done that, it was madness, of course, but not madness confined to him. He was part of a widespread manifestation of lunacy. He was hardly responsible for burning coffee in Brazil, for example, or for our dumping fish back into the sea off Britain.

"He slaughtered hogs, didn't he?" she repeated, her eyes flashing, "and children were starving." I said: "Madam, I find it difficult to believe Mr. Roosevelt or his wife are less mindful of the poor than the gentlemen on Wall Street who seem to dislike him so much." She then said that he had made men dig up the street-walk on one side and carry it across and put it down on the other side—just to make work. I said that even that, bad as it was, was superior to our English method of giving the dole which made no work at all but merely rotted men in body and soul.

I see that Henry Wallace and Eric Johnston, President of the United States Chamber of Commerce, have been arguing at long range. Johnston says that if there is a threat of Fascism in America it is to be found, not in Big Business, but in Big Government. To which Henry Wallace answers: "The essence of American Fascism is putting dollars first and men second. Its method to get control of government is to poison the channels of information. An outstanding example is Colonel Robert R. McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*."

This same Eric Johnston is credited with saying: "A statesman is a politician who is held up by equal pressure from all directions."

The Americans are specialists in wit. "Watch your coat, hat and girl friend," says a sign in an army camp. Of a depth charge: "When one of those things goes off your shirt-tail runs up your back like a window shade." Again: "A little inflation, like a little pregnancy, keeps on growing."

I noted a remark a few days back on the possibilities of California maintaining half a dozen times as many people as she does now. I observe also the Governor of Alaska, Ernest Gruening, says that Alaska is a vast empty land waiting for people. About 200 million pounds of salmon waste is thrown away each year in Alaska, he says. Yet fish meal is a valuable commodity, and in one area 2,000 tons yearly could be produced from raw material to be had merely for the cost of collection. Alaska, he asserts, is the place for a man with a little capital, 1,500 to 15,000 dollars.

My Irish friend in New York, quoted by me on January 30th, writes again: "It does seem, doesn't it, that when criticism is passed out, we want to be free to say what we want about the



English and to handcuff them when it comes to their turn to reply. I have never quite known how to explain this sensitivity, but it does exist. At the back of it lies, I think, the tradition of this country that Europe is a wicked place, and that we must have nothing to do with Europeans and that they must stew in their own juice. This at any rate has been the gist of what Washington, Jefferson *et al.* have had to say, and over the years enough has sunk in so that people here probably feel they are purer than those abroad, and that when we go into a war it is plain idealism and altruism, and that our European allies should appreciate this, be thankful for what they can get and should say nothing which indicates we should do more. You just can't reverse a traditional way of thought in a couple of years, and a nation that for generations has thought of itself as an island free from entanglements won't really relish involvement—no matter how much it may be their business." He adds: "This country is more savage than England—great drouths and great rains and floods and snows, great cold and great heat. . . . We may be less children of our parents than children of our climate, and if you stay here long enough you may begin to manifest American characteristics. . . ."

The white sails of yachts are in the bay, the dark-green hills are touched with scarves of cloud, the sun shines and the carillon of a nearby church is ringing out the Old Hundredth, "Onward, Christian soldiers" (one or two hymns in between I don't know), and to wind up, "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "America," which employs the same tune as our "God save the King"—and why, in God's name, this belly-ache of a tune should have been so widely used is one of the mysteries of life.

*February 15th, 1944.*

A friend who has sailed with the U.S. Navy says they have a deep admiration for our own Navy. He found their young officers rather reluctant to take responsibility, and found also that the U.S. Navy's "paper work" was prodigious—even greater than our own.

Further comments on the anti-British situation:

"This is an anti-British city. The Irish are powerful and hold many political key positions. We have some 300,000 Italians, too. The situation is worse than, say, in 1930. We've had ten years of vigorous enemy propaganda to combat."

"There's a vested interest in anti-British stuff. Indians, and now a number of West Africans, earn a good living lecturing. Men who never earned tuppence now receive about 130 dollars for a lecture abusing us. It would be a bad thing for them if their grievances were remedied. The good nature and generosity of the Americans make them gullible and creates a market."

I find a good deal of support among observers for my belief that our English approach to the Americans is too soft and too apologetic, and too flattering. One tells me that he partially ruined his health waging, three years ago, a fight against our soft official attitude—but he couldn't get us to change it.

One of the more friendly papers here—two of the remainder are Hearst and another Scripps-Howard—demanded that General Maitland Wilson be dismissed. If an English paper were to write in that fashion of an American general these same Americans would almost disintegrate. But there's no one answer to this tough problem. The question is: Are we making progress? Two of the principal American radio-commentators answer me: "Yes." A year ago they often received a fair number of letters accusing them of being both British and Russian agents, because they spoke cordially of our achievements. To-day such letters are negligible. On the other hand, it's possible to hold a Press conference here, as I did yesterday, when the representatives of Hearst are about as friendly as those from the *Berliner Tageblatt* would be. This conference lasted an hour—about eight or nine, including two photographers, came. A representative of the American Office of War Information took notes. But I cannot see that anything has been printed. They apparently don't want to tell their readers about England or our war casualties or our A.B.C.A. or the hours our munitions people work as compared with America's. My answers on India and the British Commonwealth were not, it seems, their cup of tea. One of these Hearst papers seldom uses the word "British" unless it can do so derogatively. When our troops are succeeding, we are "Allied troops." When there's a setback the headlines say the Americans are rescuing the British. A Hearst feature-writer was bold enough to say to me that we had only given our jet-propeller aircraft to America because we know she can make it better than we can, and that we are only fighting in Burma to get the country back—nothing to do with its being part of the over-all strategy of the Pacific war. They pretend—or choose—to believe no different. Facts

they push aside. A group of journalists in Chicago were quite recently labouring under the delusion that it was American aircraft and crews which have done much of the bombing of Berlin, when the truth is that in this February, 1944, no such aircraft has yet been to Berlin. On the other hand, it must be said that a Hearst Presswoman said to me: "I hope to marry an Englishman—that tells you how much of an enemy I am." I remember a city where an important Hearst editorial man who hopes America will collaborate, but thinks she will not, said to me with a little wry smile as he shook hands: "I'm not a very good representative for the Hearst Press."

An earnest young man from *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune* assured me that his papers are keeping to the middle of the road, and that it is a very heavy responsibility which they feel. The responsibility is certainly heavy. America is doing something with *Life*, *Time*, and the *Readers' Digest* (now published in Chinese, Swedish, Arabic, Portuguese and Spanish editions) which has previously been done by their films—spreading the American view world-wide. This deserves to be noted.

As against the worser side, there's an immense lot of American goodwill which may well outweigh the contrary. My reception when I went to do a short broadcast to the Pacific was warm indeed, and some of our officials tell me how complete is the American trust and help to us. An Englishman of distinction who has lived here three years said: "In standing up to the Americans—as I think we should—we must not be superior—makes them rage; it's the one thing to avoid. When we just assume we are right, they grow incoherent with fury." Was it G. B. S. who spoke of two peoples divided by a common tongue?

Two statements to me:

An American journalist: "We say the boys will be back to the Golden Gate in '48"—meaning that's when the Pacific war will be over.

American retired general: "You gave Hitler the green light to go ahead and start another war." I replied that Americans were as bad, if not worse.

Not long ago a film advertisement in a newspaper here announced in large type: "Exhales lust!"

A tale of how an American soldier was advised to get the Japs out of their holes in the ground: "I was told to shout

'Down with the Emperor'—that that would bring 'em out. So I shouted it. And, sure enough, a Jap bobbed out. But he came towards me shouting, 'Down with Roosevelt!' Well, gee! I couldn't shoot a Republican!"

San Francisco sparkles at night as though a piece of the firmament had fallen on the earth. The streets, rising sharply five or six hundred feet, wind about like strings of stars, the feet of the pillars of the Oakland Bridge which runs across the bay are girdled with lights, the pillar tops flash red, then die and flash again, the air is clear and touched with crispness. By day the hills round the lochs and bays are shades of dark green shadowed and hollowed like the cheeks of Abraham Lincoln, and beyond the higher hills are dark almost to blackness. These hills are akin to those round the Clyde at Rothesay. Fog comes rolling in through the Golden Gate Bridge. C. S. Forester, the English novelist who is living at Oakland across the bay, tells me that peach and almond are blooming in the streets. He calls this the finest climate in the world. But in San Francisco itself there's a good deal of sinus trouble caused by fog and rapid changes in temperature. It can be unpleasant in August.

At Oakland are further Kaiser shipyards, and thither I was driven this morning. Oakland, spreading over the green hill, looked from three miles off as though snowdrops were thrusting up their heads from the green of spring. Across the sky a Blimp sailed majestically, and the air was filled with a kind of brilliant lightness. This shipyard was, they said, "a monster that grew overnight." Richmond, a township nearby, had in January, 1941, 22,000 inhabitants; to-day it has 130,000. In January, 1941, the ground was swamp, and the rain fell for forty-three days on end as conversion of swamp into shipyard was accomplished. We British had a good deal to do with the yard, for it was our order for thirty Liberty ships that brought it into being. The first ship was launched in August, 1941, and delivered in October. The thirty had been built by the middle of 1942. But, swift as this was, Pearl Harbour accelerated it. Liberty ships for America began to take shape alongside those for Britain.

Not all the yards are building Liberty ships; there's a yard building troopships. But, of course, there's a little hyperbole in that statement, for in reality thousands of workshops up and down America are taking part in building those ships, fashioning this piece or that and sending it across the continent. Over 120 cities and towns in thirty-three states of the Union are

doing the work. But what is being done here is most impressive. One sees the deckhouse, weighing when complete 240 tons, moving down an assembly line. When finished it is cut vertically into three pieces and lifted in three pieces on to the ship. Once, three cranes were harnessed together and a lift of 240 tons was accomplished. The other remarkable fact is that much of this building is done upside down—it is quicker, and allows a lot of welding and wiring, etc., to be done at floor level instead of overhead.

The management estimates that 50 per cent. of the workers would like to remain here when the war is over. Some are travelling 120 miles to and from the yard each day.

Under the heading "Liberty Flapdoodle," the yard journal, *Fore'n'ast*, of January 28th, 1944, tells how a Liberty ship was torpedoed in the Pacific and sailed to Australia with her stern 8 feet under water and her propeller shaft revolving in the sea. "This is the only Liberty ship in the world with a swimming pool," the crew said. Her name was the *William Williams*. The article adds that 1,800 Liberty ships are sailing the seas, and that a very few have cracked up—that is, broken in two. Bad loading of cargo, says the article, can cause any ship to crack up. Chief Trial Engineer E. W. Allaf remarks on that: "I ask you, is that any cause for criticism—fourteen out of 1,800?" Again: "It's flapdoodle, this pot-shotting at Liberty ships by self-appointed critics just because a ship or two breaks in two," said Captain Walter A. Brunnick, quoted by the article, a sixty-two-year-old seaman who sailed a Liberty ship for 20,000 miles without mishap.

An Englishman may comment that, beyond any doubt at all, these ships have played a fine part in achieving victory, and I was glad to say it when invited to speak to 18,000 work-people over the microphone in one yard, and to 10,000 in another.

Henry J. Kaiser himself had a father German-born; he himself has something of both ruthlessness and sentimentality in his make-up. He gets most of his plans carried out by younger men, notably by his son Edgar, who is thirty-five, and Clay Bedford, who is forty. These two run the shipyards; it was probably Bedford who had most to do with sending deckhouses down assembly lines and building pieces of ship upside down. But the furious over-all drive comes from Henry Kaiser. He has the knack of sleeping for a few minutes as his car drives along and then waking up and continuing the talk where he

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left off. I asked if he has a sense of humour. The reply was that you almost have to label a thing "joke" for him to know you are being funny. "What does he think of the war?" I asked. The answer was he hadn't been heard to talk of it—perhaps the war is just one more gigantic piece of work to be done. Was he particular about his clothes? Well, he buys suits and neckties in half-dozens, but then forgets about them. Games? Oh, he once had a game of golf and didn't see why he shouldn't go the shortest way to the green, so he played through the rough, got hopelessly lost, and gave it up. He doesn't seem to have played since. He often says he isn't interested in money, but he's most certainly interested in his 250,000 workpeople—ponders over what's to be done to keep them in jobs. He was anti-New Deal, but all his work now is for the Government. He hurls many telegrams at Washington, but his favourite method is telephoning—he holds long-distance hook-up telephone talks, roping in two or three places on the same talk.

*February 16th, 1944.*

Judging by advertisements in San Francisco papers, a racket in x-ray is proceeding. You can be x-rayed for a dollar. "See your own organs with your own eyes," say the advertisements. A number of others deal with love. "Lonely? Want a sweetheart, wife, husband or pal?" Another: "Jane Elsy—Matrimony. Love is life's greatest reward."

At a meeting of the Advertising Club with several hundred guests for lunch, the principal speaker cracked the old joke about the song of love being not the vibrating note of a violin, but the squeak of the bedsprings. Some embarrassment.

Phrase quoted to me: "He left here and went on to Hollywood, thus raising the intellectual level of both places."

A journalist tells me that he was on an American warship off China when a fearful fire was raging ashore—one of the world's catastrophes. The Americans were seeing a movie. He expressed some mild surprise. "But," they said, "we *always* have movies—we have movies every day."

Along with a kind of gangsterism there's also a good deal of charming honesty in this country. There's a writer who, having written a letter, throws it out of the window and relies on some passer-by posting it for him—says the method has never failed.

An Englishman said to me: "One reads something anti-

British and feels like writing a hot reply to the paper. Usually one doesn't and, sure enough, within a few days some American takes up the cudgels, makes the same points in answer, and often makes them better."

Lunched at an advertising club. A film was shown of American Red Cross and an appeal made for funds. No doubt about warmth of heart and readiness to get their hands down for the troops. Members wore a large metal button with their name on—Sinclair Lewis's novels spring to life. The main speech was by a man who held up a series of diagrams to illustrate his points. I am not certain what his theme was, but he didn't like Negroes: spoke of Negroes being members of a Disappointment Club—they had to disappoint a white three times before they could join. Also he was somewhat gloomy—seemed to think America is in for a difficult time. Ninety per cent. of the motor-car works and shipyards in this area, he said, are in the hands of the Government, but a motor-car factory on which the Government has spent a million dollars is worth, to sell, only 75,000 dollars. Among his other statements were that, pre-war, 63 per cent. of the labour of California was engaged in distributing and servicing merchandise; and that whereas it took 100 people to make a bomber in 1940, the number now varies from five to ten. He said—and I found it refreshing—"The customer is seldom right." He'd been reading the Socialist Party's political programme of 1932, and found that every one of the things they had wanted they had gotten! I gathered he found this most alarming.

I could count on two hands the Americans I've seen chew gum during two months. I've seen more gum chewed on a single London escalator than in all America. Do they chew when nervous or lonely or irritable? Or is it that most of the gum is shipped overseas to the troops?

America seems determined to win this war with as little loss of life as possible. And how admirable that is! The weight of fire they're using in the Pacific, both from warships and bombers and troops, to polish off small pockets of Japs on various islands is colossal. It is sometimes claimed that fifty Japs are killed in these affairs for every American. A British naval observer passing through here said, after watching one or two of these operations, that nothing on earth could stand against this weight of artillery and bombing.

An American retired general said to me: "We'll have knocked the legs off the Japs by the end of the year."

The *Argonaut* describes a "Peace Now" meeting in New York at which somebody named Hartmann, said to be a Harvard professor, spoke, saying: "Germans and Japs are no worse than Americans and British. I apologise for American foreign policy. Why did we get into this war?" He added, when speaking of atrocities: "There is no brutality equal to the brutal refusal of Britain and America to feed the starving people of conquered Europe after World War I." Miss Bessie Simon, the Secretary, is credited with the remark: "This Hitler talk is all bunk. . . . Hitler made Germany so strong the British fought him. . . . This is an imperialistic war."

The City Editor of a San Francisco paper told a group of us at lunch: "I sent to relatives of victims of Jap atrocities to get stories and pictures, arguing it would keep up morale. The relatives said, 'What the hell! We don't want to have anything to do with the war.'"

These manifestations of scepticism and, maybe, people influenced by enemy propaganda—which is unceasing—could probably be equalled in a smaller way in England, but they're worth noting.

My taxi-driver said: "People aren't war-minded at all—nobody suffers here 'cept there's too many people—200,000 of 'em come in, over an' above."

February 17th, 1944.

I travelled down to Los Angeles to-day by what's called "The Daylight"—an extremely modern train. A voice over a loud-speaker tells us where we are, how long we shall remain at the next stop, who has a telegram waiting for him, and, from time to time, we get the news bulletins over the radio too. We also get the ads. This radio, I think, is overdone.

The dictum attributed to Northcliffe that the public must be given what it wants, runs riot. The public wants love. O.K., give it love. A film advertisement shrieks, "A burning, soaring song of love." Another: "Give love a chance!"

By the way, *Abie's Irish Rose*, Anne Nichols' play which she sold her jewels to get started some fifteen or twenty years ago, is still running.



This train journey must be one of the loveliest and most diverse in the world. The morning itself is perfect, bright and sunny. At 10 a.m. we appear to be in Italy, by 11.30 there's a touch of the Irish plain with black hills rimming that plain, half an hour later we're running down a river valley, with little water and immense stretches of dry sand, trees without foliage, and cattle standing like statues, the hills as shaven as those of Cumberland. By 3.30 we race past orchards set in green grass that is starred with yellow flowers. And now we run close to the blue sea edged with foam. At four o'clock tall palms have crept into the landscape, and an hour later we run through countryside that might be Kent set amid the mountains of North Wales. The first glimpses of Los Angeles are less inspiring—dilapidated bungalows lying among buildings that have an impermanent look.

My bedroom costs 11 dollars (55s. in English money).

*February 18th, 1944.*

Lunched at the Brown Derby at Hollywood, walls lined with cartoons—line drawings in black and white, bold and clever. From time to time somebody's name is called out to take a telephone call. I'm assured you can have your name called at a dollar a time. Being called makes you sound important and implies trade with you is brisk.

Onion soup exquisite.

A Press conference brought a man who was clearly on my side—asked questions pro-British. He formerly worked long in London; said the big studios are now trying to control what's written about them by saying: "We'll send the pictures and stuff off for you—just tell us where to send them to." He has increased difficulty, he said, in getting the information he wants.

An American child was rebuked for leaving a saucy plate. "Eat it up—why, there are lots of children in Europe who are starving—would be glad of it." "Name one!" said the child.

Recently a farm woman came into the city from the countryside and, on seeing money being thrown about, said in awe: "They're spending money like aircraft workers!"

There's a Hollywood celebrity who has been married four times, but had only two wives—has married each one twice. The one divorced at the moment lives with his parents. For a man to meet three of his former wives at one party is rare but not unknown.

We drove round looking at a few sights; first, motels; these are small groups of apartments where a couple can check in in the evening and check out next morning; reasonable in price. Several couples in a day can check in and out of the same rooms. Next, the "drive-ins"—you drive up to a kiosk and a meal is brought out to your car on a tray. Admirable. We passed a sign announcing Zeppo Marx, an agent. "He's the Marx brother who wasn't remarkable as an actor, so he became an agent." One Hollywood agent is credited—repeat credited—with making six million dollars last year. There are film companies which made no more than that.

"See that tower on the hill?" says my lively and knowledgeable companion. "And that house nearby—that was Valentino's. Empty now. Sometimes a blue light shines there—that's Valentino's spirit. Sure, that's what the girls say." We swept round climbing roads, past hills hidden with trees and gardens; among them, Spanish-looking houses. At Bel-Air live the oil-men or the aircraft-makers who count themselves a trifle more solid than the movie-men. Oil made Los Angeles; movies came later, aircraft superimpose on movies.

My companion murmured: "I was looking for a house. I found one which had two of everything—down to two toilettes in the same room—two people who couldn't bear to be parted, I suppose." "They say there's no money in Hollywood now—a man earning 5,000 dollars a week says he's only got 1,200 left after paying taxes. . . . There's a house yonder where a piece of statuary overlooks the bath and water spurts out of the fingers—gives you kind of a shock. . . ."

An American woman friend worked for six months last year in an aircraft factory. (By the way, this factory is so well camouflaged that even the hill that rises before you is unreal.) A girl welder growled about her small pay packet. Her friend said: "Well, in England you'd get less." "Well, so what?" said the first woman. "They don't need the food we do—they don't eat so much—they just drink tea all day."

Second authentic conversation:

Work-girl fiddling with her hair before the glass: "Gee, he's thrown me over again—didn't turn up last night."

Friend: "You spoil it all by living with the guys."

First girl: "Well, sure. I always think intercourse makes it more intimate, see?"

Third conversation:

First girl: "Say, I'm getting worried."

Second: "Worricd?"

First: "Yea. I'll be out o' work in two weeks."

Second: "Why do you say that?"

First: "Gee! don't you read the papers? We've sunk all the Jap ships and we've taken over all the R.A.F. Don't you *read* the papers?"

I had some friendly argument to-night with two or three English writers and actors about what's called the "release" of British pictures: *Thunder Rock*, for instance, a most excellent British picture, was bought by Hollywood, but has not been shown in America. There are two schools of thought: one says that no British picture ever gets a good release—it is thrust into the tiny or unimportant theatres. Certainly *Desert Victory* seldom got into the best picture-houses outside, perhaps, New York. The other school argues that British pictures are shown on their merits—that it's purely a box-office question. These cite, *The Lady Vanishes* and *The Thirty-nine Steps* and *Private Life of Henry the Eighth*. The first group return to the charge and ask where *Spitfire* (known in England as *First of the Few*) was shown? How many British pictures made with British capital in Britain have been bought in the past year? Hardly a one. And the second group retort: "It's getting more difficult to show pictures because they have longer runs. There are some good *American* pictures made two years ago that haven't been seen yet."

At any rate, I think it's clear that, for one reason or another, British pictures seldom do get a good showing in America, and that we British make poor use of our bargaining weapons. About 30 to 40 per cent. of the revenue of U.S.A. pictures comes from England—we charge infinitely higher prices in our main cities than does America to go and look at them. Nobody in America pays 12s. 6d. to see a picture. True, England makes some dud pictures (and so does U.S.A.), but we also make some fine ones, and we ought to see to it they get better-shown. Films are one of our best interpreters. To one writer who said, "It's purely business," I said: "I suppose it doesn't occur to anybody that loftier reasons might enter in—better international relationships and knocking isolationism on the head; for I believe *Thunder Rock* would help in that."

I spent an hour or two looking round Warner Brothers' studios. The pictures they make from time to time seem to me to have a more worth-while purpose than most Hollywood

products. They made, among others, *Mission to Moscow*. One of their film directors said he put the mental age of the average cinema audience at thirteen—if you ranked it higher than that, you'd make a mistake and come a cropper.

Interesting to see the semi-permanent sets—streets, town hall, a cinema, a lake. A railway station was being shot—steam issued from the coaches. Either this steam or something else smelled powerfully of incense.

Lunch at Warner Brothers was well-done—a long room, waiters in white jackets and as attentive and suave as those at the Ritz; food immaculate. I almost felt I was breaking their hearts to eat so little. Suddenly rain drummed on the windows, heavy, tropical. (It rained for the next thirty-six hours, with hail and a little snow. A Frenchwoman said ironically: "But they don't admit it is rain here—they say it is liquid sunshine. The papers will call this a drizzle.")

Dined to-night at James Hilton's with Frank Capra, John Balderston, R. C. Sherriff, Victor Saville, Michael Hogan, Hugh Stewart. Hilton was born in Leigh, Lancashire, only fifteen miles from my own birthplace. He's a man of great resolution, and of ideas beyond those of the ordinary Hollywood writer. He talked to me of some modern dangers that may develop—for example, was it not possible that since a democratic leader might become dependent to a large degree on the quality of his radio addresses, might not those addresses be written for him? And if his voice were a bad voice, might not another man begin to speak in his name? And, if both those things happened, then would not the leader become something of a myth? Does Stalin broadcast? And if not, is it because his voice is a poor one? Hilton, Saville and I had some talk together on the proportion of reactionaries in U.S. I was glad to find they put the proportion lower than some others I have met. Incidentally, a writer had said to me earlier in the day that most Hollywood studios are under the thumb of a single dictator.

Hilton took me to see the view from his window—the house stands on top of a hill. Far below, the lights of the city shone. I said it reminded me of San Francisco. He smiled and said it reminded him of Bolton seen from Chorley New Road, and he spoke of walking home to Leigh from Manchester, a distance of twelve miles, when as a boy of thirteen or fourteen, he had missed the last train.

An American spoke to me of Russia, quoting other Americans who say, "We'll be fighting Russia before we've finished." This reminded me of what was said at a cocktail party given last evening in Mr. Norman Chandler's room on top of the *Los Angeles Times* building. One of his staff kept asking me: "Aren't you British afraid of Communism sweeping Europe? What are you going to do if Russia overruns Germany and France?" I said: "I don't think most of us are afraid of it. I shouldn't be sitting comfortably here but for Russia—and, anyhow, if anybody wants me to fight Russia after we've polished off Germany and Japan, the reply will be in the negative." I was asked: "What about this Commonwealth Party—are you going Socialist?" I replied that I think Acland a lightweight in politics and that it would be unwise to imagine England is going Red because one or two by-elections are lost by the Government; I argued we are a conservative people, with a small *c*, and that we shall not move violently in any direction, and that I, a Radical, hope Britain's place at the peace table will be shared by both Tories and Socialists—that I shouldn't like our part to be played solely by one side or the other.

(I asked, in passing, the salary of the managing editor of a paper such as this. The reply, if my memory is right, was about 27,000 dollars. Now, the circulation is between 300,000 and 400,000 on weekdays and about 100,000 more on Sundays.)

At this cocktail party—we sat in comfort round a table—we ate the finest olives I have known. When I mentioned this a tin of them was thrust upon me.

For convenience' sake, I'll refer to a lunch two days later at the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce given by Mr. Leonard Read, the General Manager, to which the President and half a dozen other leaders came, men running aircraft works, growing fruit and so forth. It was a lively lunch, with plenty of good humour and some blunt talk. I found agreement in theory that America will co-operate in international affairs post-war, but grave doubts how it's to be done or how far that co-operation will continue once awkward practical difficulties manifest themselves. On their side the following views were given: One said: "Last war we were idealistic and thought we knew what it was all about. We are now more realistic and are not so sure what it's all about." To this I said: "We in England are even surer than last time what it's about—it's a war against slavery." Another said: "There'll never be an end of wars till all nations are run by free peoples and liberty-loving peoples. What's the difference as between the slavery imposed by Russia and that

of Germany?" I replied that I think Russia is changing all the time—free-er in religion now than she was, and, anyhow, I prefer Stalin to Hitler. A third said that the causes of wars are almost entirely economic. America's post-war co-operation would depend a good deal, maybe, on how closely the British Commonwealth was knit together. Would we move closer within the Empire? I said: "I don't know. I am merely an observer. It would not surprise me if we did. You in America are just beginning to feel the strength within you. Who knows what it's going to do to you? If it hadn't been for our Commonwealth this war would have been lost. We have our contribution to make to the world—we have made it before and shall do again. Why should we grow weaker—a bad thing for the world if we do." I asked what they think of the suggestion that a demagogue like Huey Long might sweep America off her feet into imperialism? They thought it couldn't happen—partly because it would cost too much money to keep armies abroad; the American people would never stand for it. I asked: "What about an international air force? Are you prepared to make your quota?" They seemed to doubt it—America would want to know much more about the purpose for which it would be used. They thought the most that could be done in taking action against a possible aggressor was to insist on the thing going to arbitration before anything more violent happened. I said: "But that is, in fact, a very great deal. Had that happened, Japan and Italy and Germany would all have been attacked before they moved, or the instant they moved. What we've got to get into our heads is that what we did before or failed to do is hopeless. We've got to try a new way. Once we realise the price of *not* finding a way, we shall find one." When they spoke of us British being too slow and not acting when Hitler went into the Ruhr, I retorted: "You were even worse—you were not in the League of Nations at all. Hitler counted on us all being selfish and saying: 'To hell with you, I'm all right'—and he nearly got away with it." They seemed to agree with those remarks—at all events, nobody challenged them.

*February 20th, 1944.*

To-night, to the Angelus Temple of Aimée Semple McPherson. Aimée makes a staged entrance dressed in white with a red silk scarf hanging round her neck like a parson's stole, and a scarlet cross in jewels on her breast. In her arms she bears a sheaf of red roses. Presently she dons a cloak of shining blue and over that one of cream. Her hair is golden and her face made up as

an actress's is made up, for she sits and preaches under spot-lights. She has tremendous character—something of Gracie Fields and Mac West; she manages to be likeable and, despite her showmanship, I imagine she does a lot of good. She makes religion theatrical and picturesque, blatant and vulgar; she appeals to that in America which has *naïveté* and is stirred by emotion; she does, in short, what some other evangelists have done before. She is Canadian-born. She told us on this evening that she was seventeen and a half before she found God—"I didn't go to Him till I knew He loved me"—and she drew for us a picture of Christ looking for her down a Canadian road and crying: "Aimée! Where are you, Aimée? Oh, there you are!"

A brass band wearing red jackets is conducted by a young man in a cream uniform, remindful of Goering's uniform. Brass, flags and uniforms have their part; two young men on the dais hold large standards, one the Stars and Stripes. The choir of young or older maidens wear white dresses and blue ties; their song-books are backed with the same blue. Microphones are much used, and a telephone is on the platform; the service is broadcast and points that don't "come off" in this auditorium may sound successful over the radio. For example, two or three times Aimée asked us to raise our hands if we wanted to buy such-and-such a ticket. Sometimes hardly a hand was raised, but doubtless over the radio the impression was different.

The choir entered to the brass band's playing of "A life on the ocean wave"—the symbolism of which became apparent later when the theme of the meeting proved to be: "Come aboard the ship of grace." The guest speaker was a doctor of medicine who had been a prisoner in a concentration camp near Shanghai. Seldom has a man talked so long and said so little; the burden of it was their delight at getting free, and on to the right ship, and, finally, seeing the Statue of Liberty at New York. So that when Aimée took the floor—and what an amateur she made the doctor appear!—she told us that we were all in concentration camps and implored us to come aboard the ship! She held her arms aloft—shapely arms and hands emerging from their cream robe—and the curtain behind her drew apart. Behold! a tableau of the barbed wire and wretched prisoners and a sentry marching to and fro. And now into the scene there entered Christ Himself wearing a brown beard and holding out His arms in succour. A second tableau showed us the lighted ship bobbing across the sea (much applause for this) and the

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third, the ship's gangplank down at New York and families united. "Oh, *don't* you wish our boys were all coming home like that?" asked Aimée. The audience murmured or shouted its affirmation. Aimée said *inter alia* that we are *in* this world, but not of it, merely passing through on our way to the heavenly mansions. From time to time she would cry: "Say 'Amen' to that!" whereupon the audience said, "Amen!" Or she would ask us to clap our hands as we sang, and most folk did so. An early request had been that we should all shake hands with our neighbours, and this, too, we did.

She has an expansive and all-embracing smile, beams on her choir, and thanks the performers and singers as though they were tremendous people. She besought us to triple our usual gifts, and a male speaker asked that somebody should give 50 dollars to sponsor the radio broadcast. This same gentleman said we could ring up the Temple at any hour of the twenty-four and ask for help or advice or prayers, and in that event we would be prayed for. I end where I began; this Angelus Temple may strike an English observer as extravagant and eccentric, but this country is not England.

I had spent four hours earlier in the day looking at Frank Capra's films, *Prelude to War*, *Divide and Conquer*, *Battle of Russia* and *Negro Soldier*. I had already seen *Battle of Britain*. These pictures comprise one of the best statements of the Allied case ever made on behalf of the United Nations, and it is little short of tragic that the American public have not seen more of them. (They were made to instruct the U.S. Army.) *Prelude to War* makes plain that this war began in China in 1931—says so explicitly. It gives praise to parts of the New Deal (not using any words like New Deal, however). It would cause, I think, any unbiased American to ask what America was doing to stop events moving inexorably towards their end—war—and especially what America was doing when we British stepped into the path of the juggernaut and tossed our defiant little bombs at it. So perhaps it's no wonder the films have not been wider shown. No American could see them and pretend any longer that she is fighting Britain's war. No isolationist could stand for a moment against the arguments set down. The statement is made that America was still hypnotised by having two oceans between her and the enemies. "This," says the commentary in one film, "is the common man's struggle against a life of slavery." The film *Negro Soldier* is finely done, too. It burks many issues, of course; says nothing of the fact (how



could it?) that Negroes have not equality in Southern States, nor equal opportunities in the armed forces, and that the immortal statement in the Declaration of Independence that all men are born equal is not accepted or lived up to in this nation that made that fine statement. All the same, the picture pays tribute to the Negroes, and shows in some measure what they're doing. *Negro Soldier*, I think, is going to make it a little more difficult for the intransigents to maintain their anti-Negro attitude.

*February 21st, 1944.*

Afterthought on Los Angeles business men: They're worried whether, post-war, they'll find themselves competing with foreign nations—including Britain—which are subsidising trade. That's one reason they're concerned whether we shall go Socialist. If we did, they'd regard us as that much further removed from them, and that much less friendly. They foresee us in England moving Left when they are moving Right—though they're honest enough to concede that America's Government may move Leftwards, too. It's their Leftist Government they so much dislike.

I asked were they troubled over the transition from war to peace? They are; they foresee this West Coast being deep in war when the East Coast is partially finished with it; they suspect that manufacturing firms in the East will get back to peacetime production first, if for no other reason than that the U.S. Government is going to disfavor transporting goods from East to West if those goods can be made in the West.

My taxi-driver said: "You English, ain't you? I bin in England too—last year—two months in Birmingham. Liked it fine—people were swell. I spent 500 dollars in two months—oh, on beer and cabs and whatnot."

At noon to-day I shared an elevator with a man who was very affable, but also drunk. At 3 p.m. during a heavy rainfall I shared a taxi with a girl in her twenties, shabbily dressed and wearing tennis shoes and bedraggled short socks. She was beautifully drunk and bound for Hollywood.

*February 22nd, 1944.*

The deluge of rain still falls; it has seldom stopped during four days; and chilly withal. Ironically, this California is the first place I have found my tweed suit welcome.

A lively evening last night at V's.; I was a trifle provocative on the illiberal mind of America; I threw a contentious bone on the table by asking: Do British films get a fair release, and if not, why not? Why no *quid pro quo*? Opinions divided. One or two Americans conceded that Hollywood is trying to kill the British film industry; another U.S. scenario editor said: "I'll tell you what it is—your British pictures are not *art*." (Oh dear!) A third and fourth said it was a matter of pure business—why buy British pictures if they didn't draw in the money? This, however, was cancelled out somewhat by statements that some of our British pictures have been immense box-office successes. I said: "Anyhow, half your pictures that *are* any good are made by English writers in Hollywood and by English players." "Why did they come?" somebody cried. I said: "Money." "But you English are not so poor," said my opponents. It got a bit heated—the conflicts just under the surface rose to the top. Instructive. This morning an English writer rang up to draw my attention to the new Motion Picture Alliance formed in Hollywood with the purpose (said my informant) of stopping subversive elements, preserving the American way of life, and preventing the notion spreading abroad that the film industry is run by Communists and cranks. He said some of those supporting the movement are thought to have Fascist tendencies; he took a poor view of it.

Frank Capra's pictures to which I referred yesterday are to be shown once again to the American soldiers during their last days in the Army before returning to civil life. This is looking a long way ahead; but it's an admirable decision.

Delightful experience to-day to lunch at the California Institute of Technology with Dr. R. A. Millikan, President of the Institute, a physicist, and with the Professors of History, English, Philosophy and Ethics, and heads of Departments of Social Science and Research. Dr. Wallace Sterling, Professor of History, said their views have not changed for about four years—they stood before Pearl Harbour where they stand now. All were in favour of an international police force to stop aggression, all were agreed that America will begin by co-operating in world affairs post-war, though one or two were pessimistic how long she would continue to co-operate under the stress of practical problems. One quoted without rancour a Chinese speaker who said recently that Japan was Public Enemy No. 1 and America Public Enemy No. 2 because U.S. hadn't played her rightful part in the world. Dr. Millikan said

that he thought America was worse than Britain or France in not squaring up, after Hitler's advent, to the way the world was going.

I said: "Sir, we were all sinners together." One with very close contact with the young students said the lads seemed to think that once Germany and Japan have paid for their sins, they must be allowed to develop in peace. One professor advocated, however, thrusting back Japan and Germany to the state of being non-industrial nations, back sixty or seventy years. But I doubt if anybody else present thought this possible. Nobody disagreed with the notion that both countries must do the main part of their own re-education. I was asked whether the tiredness of our English people, plus the far-off nature of the Pacific war, would be a powerful brake on our helping U.S.A. against Japan. To this I said: "No; once Germany is disposed of, I can imagine our people turning with some zest to smiting great blows alongside you against our single remaining enemy. For what chance will Japan have when faced by our combined sea fleets and air fleets and armies?"

The driver who brought me back said that his own father came from Germany when he was seventeen years old, hating Germany. This driver's mother was an American woman, a Quaker, and the children were brought up to dislike German militarism and also any beliefs in being supermen. He had only one criticism of Churchill and Roosevelt—that they had said that no American soldiers would go overseas. "I knew at the time it was not so, and I felt a bit insulted that they should try and deceive us. Why couldn't they be honest with us?" He shook hands with me and wished me good luck, and told me how he and his wife often say a silent prayer of thankfulness before meals for the good food they get.

Saturday newspapers in Los Angeles contain more than a full page of advertisements of religious services to be held on Sunday by most known and some little-known denominations, Swedenborgians and Yogi, among them. The air on the Sabbath is noisy with hot gossellers.

The *New York Herald-Tribune* of February 17th has a three-column advertisement headed "A President fights Intolerance," wherein Dr. George N. Shuster of Hunter College, New York, the world's largest college for women, prints a document he has issued to 500 college faculty members. In it he denounces "a few unfortunate and isolated occurrences," and adds that in future

charges will be preferred against any member of the staff who, while on duty, asserts this war has been "wished on" the American people and ought not to be supported; or that the Papacy and all Catholics are at heart advocates of Nazism or Fascism; or that Jews are inferior to others; or that the Russian system and people are superior to our own; or that the Negro is inferior. He adds that while the thoughts of staff members can be of no concern to the Administration, the classroom is another domain and will be protected.

February 23rd, 1944.

Word from London that they finally approve our film, *Tunisian Victory*. This is good news.

Two interesting statements were made to me to-day by English people who know Hollywood well, are fond of Americans and could be said to be both pro-British and pro-American. The man said: "It has frequently happened during my years here that when the big producers show any tendency to go in the wrong direction—become reactionary, for instance—the writers band themselves together. I should say there have been fifteen screen-writers' associations formed in my time. Most writers are progressives, and this goes, often enough, for the directors and even camera-men. These associations seem to die off when their immediate purpose is done, but when a new danger arises, they spring up once more. On the other hand, I know the producers would recoil, and have recoiled, from any sort of association among British writers to see that the right impression of Britain is presented on the screen. Any pressure of that sort they would resist, and I don't blame them."

Nor do I. Of course, this right impression of Britain is important and yet . . . Take *Mrs. Miniver*. I have met hardly an English person who doesn't think that *Mrs. Miniver* was somewhat phoney or bogus. England is not very much like that. But Americans are sentimental about England—they want pictures of ducks on the pond and feudalism and garden parties and snobbery. So that, in a sense, to make England acceptable to them, you must falsify it—they'll take a piece of the truth, but not the whole truth. So that *Mrs. Miniver* possibly did more good, in one sense, than a truer picture would have done.

My informant went on: "Most American Big Business is Republican. But that isn't true of the film trade. There are both Democrats and Republicans among them. This fact, allied to

the cut-throat competition among themselves, prevents Hollywood from ganging up in any particular direction." But already Hollywood has its pressure group in Washington mindful of the trade in Europe post-war, and trying to bend Washington to its will. "The film trade," he went on, "has not the kind of solidity the steel trade has—no great plants, etc. The trade lives somewhat from picture to picture, sometimes borrowing money from banks, making great gains and occasionally great losses. The money spent yearly on salaries and material is comparatively small when you remember the total turnover ultimately involved."

The Englishwoman said the film producers like to make pictures with an English background, but they like to make them in Hollywood in their own way—they don't want to buy English pictures made in England and seldom do. English films do not, in her view, get a good release. *Jeanie*, now enjoying an extended run in Los Angeles, is showing in a small theatre, although such is the public liking for it that the run has gone on week after week. The remedy, in her view, is for an English company to make its films in Hollywood, as American companies have made theirs in England. Apparently an English magnate is considering doing this—producing in Hollywood. I said: "Would he not have to acquire American cinemas, too, to ensure the pictures were shown?" She agreed. The American producers are a trifle scared of this Englishman, I gather; if he starts, he'll have to fight.

An enthusiast for *Desert Victory* writes me: "I am horribly disappointed with the 16-mm. edition. Most of the finer shades of the picture are lost, the commentary is inaudible, and the music is so out of tune that it is painful." This opinion is vigorously contested in official quarters. What, at all events, is incontestable is that the 16-mm. editions are now, happily, booked up months ahead. Dr. Millikan, Nobel Prize-winner, is one of many who've said, speaking of the original picture: "It's the finest film I have ever seen."

An Englishman who recently toured Britain said to me that what struck him most at home was the failure to realise Britain's responsibility for leadership in the world. "If Britain will lead boldly and clearly, America will follow," he said. Of Americans, he said: "Long-range planning seems to scare 'em a bit—give 'em a pipe-line to build in record time and there's nothing they

like better. But looking a long way ahead politically—that's not their pair of shoes."

After you have sneezed in America, the following delightful exchanges may follow:

I say to you (the sneezer): "God bless you!"

You reply: "Thank you!"

I say: "You're welcome!"

You return: "That's all right."

I wind up: "O.K."

(Could you not imagine a lovers' tiff being made up by a couple of sneezes?)

This is an example of one of the charming sides to American life. I am from time to time bowled over by sheer good nature. We British have a shell. A lot of Americans have no shell—they're so sweet and innocent and uninhibited and warm-hearted that one could shed tears of gratitude over them.

A friend has been telling me how she came to work for Charlie McArthur. She was twenty-one, inexperienced, fresh from college. She advertised saying that she wanted an interesting job with a future. Quite a few people called her up in response. McArthur was one, though she didn't know it was he. He said: "There's a job here—bores me to hell. You can have it if you want it." So she went to see him. After waiting two hours, he came in. "Who the hell are you?" he asked jovially. Then—could she write shorthand? She said, Yes, although she couldn't. He dictated a letter, but she was a flop at that. He said: "Maybe you'd better take it straight on to the typewriter." But she was a flop at that, too. So McArthur said: "How about *you* dictating it and me writing it down?" And that's how they did it. I must add that she is a remarkable little person and bubbling over with fun and intelligence. She worked for him for a while. Every now and then, as they worked indoors, he'd say: "You poor little kid—cooped up here—you run off and get some sunshine."

Another acquaintance, asked to describe Hollywood, said: "It's a place with lots of funny little bungalows, all with high colonic irrigation"—for that's what the ads. say.

When somebody tells you a tall story in America, you say: "I'm from Missouri"—meaning—You tell that to the Marines.

Driving through Hollywood, we picked up a couple of dirty kids. They wanted to go to some place, so my friend took 'em in the car. She said after we'd dropped them: "One day I picked up a kid, asked him what he did, said he picked up the pins in the bowling alley—he was about ten years old—said he was making twenny or thirty a week (dollars)—soon his old man would be able to lay off."

Aimée McPherson showed our *Target for To-night* at the Temple of Angelus. In her sermon that evening she said: "I was only a girl when I became God's target for to-night, and He sure hit me with a block-buster."

Moving about Hollywood, you observe gigantic posters in pale green and white advertising Forest Lawns Cemetery. One reads that it is "The only Class A fireproof undertaking establishment." This, it seems to me, is a manifestation of the more fabulous side of Southern California, and as such draws its visitors, the live as well as the dead. If ever there was a place where Mr. Chadband might have found his apotheosis, this is that place. Over 300 acres of ground are occupied by this burial place, ground which rises several hundred feet and wherein the slopes are more expensive to lay your weary bones than is the flat. "Everything in one sacred place" reads another advertisement. They buried twenty-six people there to-day and married seven couples. I spent half an hour within the precincts this afternoon, learned that they spend a quarter of a million dollars a year in advertising and employ half a dozen attorneys handling deeds relative to tombs. I was told: "People make their money in the East and come to die in the West." I saw a rich-looking tomb of stone and bronze built for a doctor of medicine. His name and date of birth are already inscribed; the tomb waits only for his date of death—and for himself. One signpost points to the Little Church of the Flowers, another to the Wee Kirk of the Heather. Near the Garden of Memory it is written that death is like a door in a garden wall. Somewhere a handless clock ticks time away.

The head of the concern calls himself "The Builder." I didn't personally see the section for small children, but I read in another description of this cemetery that it is called "Babyland," and that at Easter the graves are decorated with rabbits and coloured eggs and, at Christmas, by toys. Among the lady attendants are embalmers, hairdressers and cosmeticians, for, apparently, make-up is applied to the women dead. (But this

last is not, I think, peculiar to Forest Lawn, for I was again told of this occurring in Texas.) It is in this graveyard that some of Hollywood's stars are buried; the mausoleums of a few of them cost as much as 50,000 dollars.

As we drove away I took a last look round, and saw, not far from the gates, another poster: "Distinctive funerals. Utter McKinley. Mortician. Everything at the time of sorrow." We drove fast to get a strong drink.

I forgot to say that after three days I got rid of my 11-dollar bedroom and got another identical a floor lower for 5 dollars. When I asked what accounted for the 6 dollars' difference, I was told: "You previously had a better view."

I left Los Angeles by train and woke up among the snows on my way to Williams, Colorado. Williams is 7,000 feet up; Indians in ear-flap caps shovel the snow; chubby Indian girls work in the hotel. To the sweets and tobacco bar come Indians wearing thin trousers, thick jackets and wideawake hats. (Why are the legs so churlishly treated by mankind?) To the coffee shop come railwaymen in caps built of cotton with enormous peaks, or caps of leather turned shiny-black with oil. As for the bus driver, he wears a cowboy hat out of a Western story. Williams is a village about the size of an Austrian ski-ing village—two streets at right angles dotted with picturesque characters plodding through the slush. I ran into a farmer rumbling towards the Western Union office to wire his wife he was stuck. He was coming from Richmond, California, where he'd been making incendiary bombs. "Mighty good money there," he said, "but I figure it kinda mayn't do me much good—I got gas on my stomach an' had to give it up." All day the snow whirled down, so that I abandoned my journey to the Grand Canyon, this gorge a mile deep and over 200 miles long down which a turbulent river runs, and had various conversations, one with the desk-clerk, a married woman with a son who's a technical photographer in their Army. She said they had an A.T.S. officer through the hotel recently—liked her very much. (It's plain to me that a 1,000 carefully picked British men and women moving about in America could work wonders. Who's the genius who says lecturers must not come—though I daresay the lecturing type are not the best.) The desk clerk said two things: (a) This war's gone on too long. (b) Nobody here knows there's a war on.

Americans often remark to me: "Must seem strange to you—



so little sign of the war." They say it a little wistfully sometimes—almost, one fancies, with a touch of apprehension. I reply: "That's so; yet the queer thing is how quickly I get accustomed to lights blazing, motor cars, fine food. When the lights go up in London again—hcggho! it'll soon seem normal. As for what Britain goes through—well, if you have to stand it, you stand it. Human nature doesn't vary a lot."

Amusing American ejaculation: "Well, for Heaven's sake!"—often an exclamation of delight.

Bound for her soldier-husband in Texas, a woman and three children, the latter looking cold in bare legs, arrived a few minutes ago. They got off a train further down the line three days ago—and the train went without them. They were shoved on a freighter train, and have been sitting up two nights. This is a sidelight on war. America is not in this war as deeply as we are—yet some of her folk suffer just as acutely. If your soldier son or husband is dead, whether he's one of a thousand or a hundred thousand, he's dead; and your sorrow is utter.

As I sit in the lounge, the American next to me talks to his friend: "Our Mayor—he used to travel the railroads—stuck placards on the side o' trucks saying, 'Come to F——, land o' plenty.' So the niggers come, lots of 'em. And presently he stands for Mayor and the niggers votes for him—and he gets elected. Yes, sir, that's how he come to be Mayor. 'Course they're all crooked, but he's less crooked than most." To which his friend said: "You just come an' live there, and you get in with 'em, and you got three hundred friends right off—yes, sir. You come there—I was *raised* there."

A man has appeared before the New York draft board named Lieueiusszzuieusszesses W. Hurrizzisztizzi. The middle name is Willikiminizisleizzii. I wouldn't like to be his platoon commander.

A travelling acquaintance has had 56 inches of bone taken from his right leg and grafted in his back—four lengths of 14 inches each cut down afterwards to 7-inch lengths. "The second day after the operation I could roll over in bed," he says.

Description of Americans: "They don't go forward with one eye glancing backwards over their shoulder as we English do. They don't think of the past—only of what's ahead."

February 25th, 1944.

I did a little toting this morning—borrowed the hotel hand-cart and wheeled my bags to the train. It was either me or the small fat Indian girl for it, and she didn't look up to it. The Negro porters at the various train cars watched me do it, standing each at his appointed door. Just occasionally one encounters complete indifference. Perhaps it's not surprising, for the anti-British newspapers sell millions of copies each day. Glance for a second at the *Chicago Tribune* of February 22nd. The first leader is headed, "Britain's candidate for President." The article charges the British Government with making statements it knows are utterly false. "The dishonesty of the whole proceeding is a measure of the ruthlessness of the British Government to swing the election"—that is, get Roosevelt elected for a fourth term. The first column of the front page holds an article attacking what it calls "the New Deal smear and smirch gang. . . . The technique of the smear was introduced by Communist artisans who studied under the Moscow Soviets, and it was perfected over a decade by industrious New Dealers." I'm not clear what steps we take to deal with Colonel McCormick's vilifications. His paper sells in the neighbourhood of a million copies a day. Our own failure to hit harder in our propaganda is apt to leave an impression that we have something to apologize for. We should be strong, not gentle; forthright, not furtive.

As we rode through the Arizona Desert—and how like the Western Desert of Africa it is! arid, stony, bare with its gorges or *wadis*—an Orientation Lieutenant of the U.S. Army expatiated to me on how much more the American civilians need Frank Capra's films, beginning with *Prelude to War* and going on to *Negro Soldier*, than the Army needs them. He is right. The civilians are only ankle deep in the war. A woman from Boston growls to me that people on the Pacific Coast of America don't know there's a war on compared with those living on the East Coast. "They don't have the hard rationing we have," she said. Boy, O boy! It occurs to me that the fact that workers are leaving the shipyards in hundreds a week will naturally make them feel the war must be getting towards its end. Winston's speech saying he's by no means sure the war in Europe will end this year should do good.

After the desert area we ran into undulating country with what looked like circular log cabins with earthen roofs. If you

scattered Lancashire's hencotes over hundreds of miles, you might get a similar impression; a necessary reminder that not all Americans are rich. Thin snow was driving over the rocks, the barren earth, the scrub, and the lone motor-cars traversing it.

Two Chinese, officer pilots in America's air force, were brought in to drink whisky. This train is dry, but a bottle of whisky was produced. Very welcome. We stopped at Gallup—shacks with wooden stairs climbing outside; the place looks impoverished. As the warm evening light shone across the desert we rode past a landscape filled with bastions and cliffs of rock—clear-cut as the white cliffs of Dover; but these were naturally of a reddish hue, and now became almost blood-red in the westering sun. A dozen minor Gibaltars rested there. Beyond them, grey heights reminiscent of Table Mountain. For an hour or so we had this magnificent sight before our eyes; in the foreground rocky slopes and mounds holding colour like precious stones. I've looked on nothing so rugged and fine since I flew over India.

My travelling companions are talking:

"Now, my dentist was called up. But they turned him down—high blood pressure. He was out. But they had him up again next week. Six weeks he wen' up every week, and the sixth week, they said, 'O.K. You're in.' They caught his blood pressure off guard."

"Yea, the Army turned my brother down, but the Navy tuk him."

"My husband, oh, he gotten a 4 F—didn' even ask for it. That was after his operation." (A 4 F is a draft rejection or postponement.)

"Yes, I've been down in Palm Springs, California. They're all on the loose down there—old women with young men, young women with old men—a lot of 'em married two or three times. My lawyer—he's very good—he says he'd allow each person one divorce—yea, I think that's fair, don't you?"

"Did you hear the story about the only time Hollywood mentioned the war? Two people had a bet it wouldn't be mentioned at a party an' when it got to the end the girl said: 'There, you see, not mentioned, I win.' But her friend said: 'No, you don't. Lissen.' Somebody was saying, 'If Mussolini hadn't abdicated that day, why, George's picture woulda made the headlines!' That was how the war was mentioned."

An American writer said to me he was sorry they haven't got a Regulation 18B, so that Colonel McCormick could be taken care of—put behind the bars till the war's over.

*February 26th, 1944.*

I awoke as we were entering El Paso, Texas. We were running past a stream cut into brown-reddish soil. On the far side were one-story flat-roofed houses and hovels, no richer-looking than a village in Spain. The middle distance was filled with earthen hills or mountains, a white cross atop one, a tower on another. "La Hacienda Café," I observed. The streets are filled with those who look Spanish or Mexican. Oh, this diverse America!

I'm here to see something of the American Army doing its training. After breakfast I rang up Fort Bliss, the oldest cavalry centre in the country now given over to training anti-aircraft gunners. They had never heard of me, but nevertheless cordially invited me along, and within five minutes of my gaining the Fort, I was meeting the Commanding Officer, Colonel John Brown, a tall and composed product of West Point who thinks, as I do, that our two peoples are apt to be too complacent. The colonel's job is to be housekeeper for the whole encampment, which stretches fifty miles in various directions; he takes care of organisation and supplies, leaving three generals free to get on with actual technical training. This sounds an admirable idea—it's been working since 1942. In half an hour we hunted up a second Public Relations officer—and found, to our surprise, that *he* knew I was coming. We went to lunch—the most notable feature of which (to me) was chopped carrot with raisins. Coffee was in enormous metal jugs. The price is 30 cents, paid as we walked out. This was Saturday afternoon—not the best for seeing work done, but we climbed into a jeep and set off for the desert. The day was brilliant, the air the clearest I ever saw, so that hills thirty miles off looked no more than ten. "When we're firing tracer at night you can see it twenty-two miles away—looks quite close." My guide, a captain who started off the war as gunnery officer on a merchantman (they rammed a submarine in the Caribbean), comes of English folk and has an English name and has an English sense of humour. Yet he, like others, was surprised to find *we* have a sense of humour, too. He found that out last October when an English ack-ack battery toured America. "One of the lieutenants had us in stitches all the time," he said. They were tickled, too, by our lads calling a peach of a girl "a smash." We bowled along, the keen, bracing air cutting through the jeep, our eyes watching the limitless

miles of scrubby desert covered with bondock and yucca and mesquite—pale, dusty-looking scrub, and the yucca like giant thistles. The clouds were lovely—bunches of fleecy white—and the far horizon on the left was filled with bare mountains, dark brown and purple and black when shadows crossed them. I felt lighter-hearted than for days, as though I had climbed out of prison into the open air. So this is Texas—or a bit of it. The Texans are not modest about their state—and why should they be? Liberators climbed through the clear sky, and the horizon was so vast that I felt I was out at sea. I wish I could convey my sense of freedom.

My captain guide spoke of going 135 miles to ski, and again of travelling 185 miles to see Carlsbad Caverns, which lie about 800 feet down, and whence from three to five million bats (at certain seasons of the year) emerge at sunset and return at sunrise. I mention the bats to stress again what a fabulous land this America is. On that, I recall a woman who told me yesterday that in riding from Palm Springs to Chicago she ran through sun, rain, snow, sleet, blizzards and a dust-storm!—all the weather there is, encountered in twenty-four hours.

We left the road and bounded in our jeep over the tufty red earth and presently fetched up alongside some lads digging themselves out—pulling out after spending a week in this desert, sleeping out—each man with the half of a small bivvy tent, so that, with a pal, it makes a tent for two. The lads were very strong-looking chaps, the Lieutenant a youth who has worked up from buck private—in private life a beef salesman. Their wind-break jackets are waterproof with a woollen lining, their gaiters higher than our own and (I think) better, their chubby, round steel helmets very comfortable (I tried one on). We found the Lieutenant-Colonel a man who used to be in post and telegraphs—a thick-set, modest, pleasant man. I asked him how his lads think of the war. He said he reckoned they wanted to kill every Jap there is—wipe 'em out, but they're not so sure about the Germans—the Germans, in their view, have a good record of scientific work behind them. I happened to say there are, of course, some good Germans, but that, as a nation, they've a genius for being badly led. He said: "My wife is German and the best woman that ever lived." But he granted they are badly led, and that we must "put paid to them." (The problems of us homogeneous English are simple compared with those of America. Vast communities here are either German-born or Italian-born or of that origin.) The Lieutenant-Colonel said that what they're short of in this train-

ing is rain—it seldom rains, and the lads need that experience. The other thing that gets the lads down is filling up the holes they've dug. Bad enough to dig 'em—but to fill 'em up again! But a lot of 'em get to like the desert. There's just one out of 750, he said, who'd rather go to the guard-house than the desert; the rest put up with it. It's pretty tough and very cold at night—and sometimes they get no sleep for twenty-four hours. They occupy twenty-two weeks to do what our English lads do in a month or so less. Where our English lads score is in being, during training, nearer home. Within twenty-four hours you can reach almost any place in Britain. But here in U.S. it takes thirty-six hours to get from Texas to Chicago, and Chicago is still a long way from the East Coast.

To-night I dined in Mexico. You walk a brief distance over a bridge in El Paso spanning the Rio Grande, and presto! Mexico. But first, I had to return to my hotel for my passport, second, my captain's permit was out-of-date, third, my passport didn't make it clear whether I could make a re-entry into U.S.A. without a new visa, and, fourth, we had to change all our money into 2-dollar bills (the only acceptable tender in Juarez)—altogether, it took an hour, during which American officialdom proved itself not much different from officialdom the world over. The Rio Grande, this river of song and story! Alas! Here it is but a shallow muddy stream where, in the darkness, urchins stood up to their knees in the river asking us to throw coins to them; which we did. How many legends are exploded as one goes about the world! Jack London is said to have searched the South Seas for authentic evidence of a man being eaten by a shark—and found it devilish hard to find.

Juarez was thronged with folk who'd crossed to Mexico to get a drink with their food, for El Paso is dry. In U.S. you run from dry to wet and next to partially dry. We ate sumptuously and drank two Old Fashioneds, which I rate the best cocktail in America. Why has England never acquired it? We glanced inside two night clubs—crowded floors, mankind sweltering, drinking, dancing, toiling as hard to enjoy himself as he does to earn his livelihood and, it seemed to me, with less success.

*February 27th, 1944.*

I went to church in camp this morning; a small wooden chapel and a congregation of twenty soldiers. Strangely, we sat down throughout—we sang the hymns sitting and we prayed sitting. To stand and kneel occasionally would have been

pleasant. I much liked the chaplain—he spoke of this hellish war and advised the lads, when their knees knock, to kneel on them and pray; said that a parson in London coined this advice in the Blitz. After the service, we had a talk. He was at Guadalcanal. We spoke frankly. He didn't much like the recent atrocity stories about the Japs, for, he said, in his experience the American soldiers felt sorry for the Jap prisoners they took, and, again, was it right to print the Jap atrocities and not mention the American atrocities? For he knew of some. I said that was, of course, true of all armies in all wars—none was altogether free of atrocities—that I had seen a few of my comrades fire machine-guns into German wounded in High Wood on the Somme in 1916. He said a pertinent thing—that if the State took over all business, wealth, etc., when a war began and paid everybody the wage of a buck private, wars wouldn't last very long. I said: "The nations we're fighting would have to do it also, or it wouldn't be much good. You've got to create in *all* nations the resistance to war and destroy the vested interest in war. No use our going into sackcloth if the Germans go into fancy uniforms." He said: "We've got to take the profit out of war." I spoke of ourselves and U.S. selling scrap iron to Japan right up to the eve of war. He replied: "Do you know what our men said in Guadalcanal when the Jap bombers were coming over? They said, 'Here comes the Sixth Avenue Elevated'—for part of that railway was sold to Japan for scrap." That, I suggest, is one of the historic remarks of this war: "Here comes the Sixth Avenue Elevated!" (Two other things he remembers: that you could smell the dead two miles off-shore, and that a bulldozer was used to bury Jap dead left behind by the Japs.)

Authentic talk. The speaker is a voluble American private, who has spent the day working a target at the shooting butts:

"Gee! they oughter get two fellas working them targets. You sit there all day talking to yourself and you gits fed up."

"Was it interesting? What did you talk to yourself about?"

"Oh, I talked about—I'll tell you. I talked to myself about the letter I was going to write next day to my mother—talked all day to myself about that. And gee! next day when I come to write the letter I couldn't remember what I'd talked about. Gee! You know, I bin a private six months and my mother, she can't understand why I ain't a private first-class. She sez to me, 'You know everything.' I said: 'What d'you mean, I know everything?' She sez: 'Well, you know everything and

a private who knows everything is a private first-class.' 'No, he ain't,' I sez. 'A private who knows everything is a sergeant.' Gee!"

A small book written for the benefit of English soldiers in America makes the excellent point that comic strips in these days deal with spies, supermen, war, disaster, sudden death, detectives and general blood and thunder.

Roosevelt says that the armed forces are short of men—that deferments in industry include over a million non-fathers, 380,000 of whom are under twenty-six years old; in agriculture, over a million non-fathers are deferred, of whom 550,000 are under twenty-six. Roosevelt wants the younger men released, and a review made of all draft deferments that were given on occupational grounds.

*Fort Bliss News*, an Army paper, records that in Italy an army dog named Chips, half shepherd and half husky dog, has been given the Distinguished Service Cross for eliminating a machine-gun nest and causing the surrender of the crew. (But it doesn't say how!) Another dog has travelled 9,000 miles and been made a corporal.

The wife of Private Thurman Walters, Battery D, — A.A.A. Bn., draws 198 dollars a month; they have six children. Private Walters is better-off in the Army than out.

Corporal Al Sweeney, when going home to Chicago, did part of the journey by air and a few miles of it on a cowboy's horse. Sweeney calls himself a Paragraph trooper of the Chairborne Division—for he works on an Army newspaper.

Remark by young and nervous U.S. officer about to address a gathering of officers: "There must be about 10,000 officers who know more about this subject than I do (gulp), but I see none of them here to-night, so I'll go ahead."

This Army newspaper carries a good many fetching pictures of film stars. It appears to recognise frankly that the troops are starved of sex.

*February 28th, 1944.*

Another enjoyable day with the American Army; drove out fifty miles across the desert to the firing point—seeing mirages



on the way, the first I've encountered since Egypt. The shooting was pretty good—excellent for troops partly trained. The Colonel in charge was in the Alcutians a month or two ago—a tough old boy; encouraging on our ack-ack shooting being better than that of the Japs; gave us figures he compiled of the rounds the Japs expended to score a hit—on this showing, their skill is below that we had reached even twenty-five years ago.

My impression is that the U.S. Army trains in more comfort than ours. Each man carries half a bivvy tent, plus two blankets plus a comforter—a quilt to place on the ground. If weather is wet or snowy, two bivvies are joined. With this equipment, he's pretty sure of a night's rest. If our troops have equipment of this sort, I have never seen it. In my time in the Western Desert they had bivvies only, I think, when they captured them from the enemy. The American soldier's mess-tin looks to me better than ours, too. Outside the mess hut at the firing point were three enormous round tanks, the first holding hot soapy water, the second and third hot clean water. Before eating and after eating, the soldier must wash his mess-tin and knife, fork and spoon in these tanks. Admirable. The tables were spotless, the food first-rate. Here is to-day's menu—and this is in the field: Breakfast: apples, fresh milk, wheat bran, two boiled eggs, fried potatoes, bread and butter, coffee and milk. Dinner: beef loaf, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable salad, buttered cauliflower, peaches, bread and butter, coffee and milk. Supper (at 5.30 p.m.): *chili con carne* (which includes meat), coloured beans, diced brown potatoes, string beans, salad, crackers, bread and peanut butter, coffee and milk. The officers and men share the same food. Obviously our own Army cannot in England have food equal to this; we don't possess it. But the American approach is different; a critic might say it is less tough. In the main camp, the men's huts hold six—no more. Each hut has a gas stove for heating! Further in the desert the camp has frame huts covered with canvas, each with a coal-stove and pipe going through the roof; each man has a folding wood and canvas bed of the sort I used in Africa. Here, too, the colonel and privates share the same rations, and it's common for officers and men to eat in the same hut. I saw the new American semi-automatic rifle which fires ten rounds single shots, by pressure of the trigger—one pressure each shot. It is a rather cumbersome rifle, though, and for bayonet-fighting less handy than the older one. But they've another excellent idea—a small carbine weighing between 5 and 6 lb. for use by

officers. This is a beautiful little weapon, very accurate up to 300 yards, with a magazine that holds fifteen rounds. This gun, too, is semi-automatic—no need to work a bolt. If I had to choose between this and a revolver, there's no question which I'd have.

It was a brilliant day; air like wine; crisp; an ideal day for soldiering. So crystal is the air that targets can be seen with the naked eye up to 32,000 feet—something impossible in England and, indeed, in most other places. Nothing better imaginable for ack-ack training. These 3-inch guns have been doing anti-tank shooting, too—took on the role of field artillery. We chatted in the sun; another lieutenant-colonel drove up who was formerly civil engineer; the young lieutenant, now talking with gusto of trajectories and discussing indirect fire, was a lawyer. Not far off, a baseball game was going on. A first sergeant, twenty years in the Army, was lamenting to me he's seen no real war yet. "I knew the South Seas well, but we're fighting on islands now I never heard of before," he said wryly. When we drove away, they said: "May see you in England." These were pleasant, quiet men, thick-set, sturdy, looking as though they'll need a deal of upsetting. Back at headquarters, I talked with another colonel who spoke of his ack-ack in the last war—converted French 75's. You had to be careful, he said, how you fixed them up pointing to the heavens or they toppled over when firing; as for getting the range and elevation, you lay on your back and looked up a kind of funnel. Well, we certainly make war with more precision now; but the men are the same, and it's the same race and fight between guns and aircraft. And the net results? Probably not much different.

*March 1st, 1944.*

Throughout most of yesterday I rode through Texas. Much of it reminded me of Essex—flat, dull country, and dried-up or wet pasture-land, though I saw few cattle; the area, however, is so vast that thousands doubtless went unseen. A pleasant, middle-aged American talked to me of his work—collecting loans made under the New Deal by the Government to local authorities wherewith to build schools, waterworks and so forth. He said the Government advanced some 700 millions and is reaping a good profit. He himself draws 6,700 dollars in salary, and pays in income tax 1,300—which is substantially less than we English pay. He said: "Till two years ago nobody had any cause at all to complain of income tax here. As a young man, I made a fortune on Wall Street, and I can't remember

that even on that I paid more tax than I do now." He asked after our British Liberal Party—was there any hope of its revival? He hoped there is. He said another thing of interest: that there are still parts of Texas where a white man has never trodden—places where no roads or rail exist. He said this, too: that a part of Texas has thriven so well on growing spinach that a statue has been erected in Crystal City to Popeye the Sailor, that character addicted to throwing tins of spinach at people! He spoke with regret of America being engrossed in pursuing the almighty dollar, and said the incidence of deaths from heart failure is steadily increasing—a fact he attributed to rushing about after money. Another travelling companion was a U.S. sergeant who had just returned after spending sixteen months in England. He wasn't far from London—got to London four nights a week. He spoke with a wry smile of England—said he was "tickled pink to be back"; he'd never known people hate one another as much as the English, Scots and Irish do. He'd spent an evening in a pub out Kensington way listening to two Irish civilians blackguarding England—made him wonder what they were up to. But this young man didn't like Texas, either—you could keep Texas as far as he was concerned. Life had got him browned off completely.

I'm now in Fort Worth. Fort Worth claims to be "where the West begins." Let us concede it. The main street has shooting galleries, rich shops and poor shops, and several pawnshops. One boasts with beautiful frankness; "We sell all kinds of dice—straight dice, loaded dice, tops and bottoms, 6-ace floats and 3-dice combinations." Another advertises: "Unredeemed high-grade used suits—Hart Schaffer-Marx, Kuppenheimer, Stein Block and Hickey Freeman."

A mature liberal-minded reporter interviewed me; when he'd finished with me, I asked him whether people felt the war in the pits of their stomachs and the urgent need of winning it. He said he didn't think so. We talked of the Negroes, too; he said that, as a Southerner, his emotions are in conflict with his intellect on this matter; he didn't think that mentally most Negroes equalled whites, though physically they are (in his view) superior—fine physical machines; and if the time comes when we all have some Negro blood, why then our physiques will improve. He thought that in the South the Negroes accept their lot, and that the North has done no good by stirring the Negroes up and making them discontented. We talked for a long time about newspapers and other topics, and I asked

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him, *inter alia*, how Americans would square up to the notion that since lads are dying every night for us, no American—and, of course, no Englishman—has the right to be safer or more comfortable or better-fed or better-paid than anybody else? I think this shocked him. I said that, provided ships were available to take it away, I much doubt if America has the right to eat as much as she does, as distinct from the rest of the world. I conceded that I don't live up to that myself, since I have two eggs on many a morning here, but only one egg every three weeks when in England.

It is now evening, and I own a fine Stetson Texas hat I didn't possess this morning, and also two bottles of whisky, all of them the gifts of Mr. Amon Giles Carter, a lean man of fifty-nine who publishes the *Star-Telegram*, and may without undue exaggeration be called a character. I don't know how many people have been given hats by Mr. Carter, but they certainly include Mr. Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt, Admiral Nimitz, and General Arnold. The last two have sent him their own caps in exchange. Moreover, last Christmas, Mr. Carter sent to the foregoing a smoked turkey, and to Anthony Eden, A. V. Alexander, Lord Beaverbrook and Air Marshal Harris also. I suspect that if Texans were not Texans, they would be Scots or Lancashiremen or Yorkshiremen. Nobody could call them modest. But nobody could call them unfriendly or ungenerous, or lacking in energy, either. Mr. Carter talked to me for a very long time. He said that some people have started newspapers with money, but no experience, and some with experience, but no money. He, however, started with neither, and that the result is a paper with the largest circulation in the State of Texas. Mr. Carter paid his last visit to England in 1942, and he can still talk about it at prodigious length. Like Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. Lloyd George, he requires only a nod to keep him going. He has an office in his newspaper building—an office packed with pictures, spurs, miniature saddles, pistols (two with diamond-studded pearl handles), the spades that turned the first sods at various factories, and innumerable drawings and photographs of Will Rogers. Mr. Carter has a pair of Texas riding boots with his signature inscribed on them. He delights to tell that in England he never saw a man drunk and he never heard a policeman bawl anybody out; while he found us English formal at times, he found us most of the time delightfully informal, and our hospitality extremely warm. He thinks England and America can both learn something from one

another, and is sure we can—and must—work together. He has a fine cellar, but he has not taken a drink since his son, Lieutenant Amon G. Carter, Jun., became a prisoner of war, and will not take a drink till his son gets home again.

When I visited the Swift Meat Packing Plant, I was given a leaflet asserting that if all the hogs in Texas were one hog, he could dig the Panama Canal in three roots and one grunt, and if all the Texas steers were one steer, he could stand with his front feet in the Gulf of Mexico and his hind feet in Hudson Bay and punch holes in the moon with his horns. The hyperbole proceeds: "If your front gate is not at least 18 miles from your front door, you do not belong to society in Texas. Down on the King Ranch the front gate is 150 miles from the front porch. Other Texas landlords have mountains on their ranches, and one has 40 miles of navigable river on his farm. If all the people of U.S.A. were to move to Texas it would still be no more densely populated than Massachusetts. The United States, with Texas left out, would look like a three-legged Boston terrier." Texas, indeed (say the Texans) is all North America except a small part set aside for the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The turning of steers, hogs, calves, and sheep from those we see in the fields to those we eat cannot be expected to be a very pleasant business to the onlooker; nor is it. A good deal of the killing is done by Negroes—steers are slaughtered with a two-handed long hammer (one blow is usually enough), and hogs and sheep with a knife. A man can kill 300 or 400 hogs an hour; there's a flick of the wrist in it, like a mashie shot at golf. A great wooden wheel with chains attached lifts the hog by one of its feet, hoists it up and round so that the knife can be used with the maximum of dexterity. A scalding bath causes the hair to be easily removed, and whatever hair is left is finally burnt off with a gas flame-thrower. Whatever the animal, within forty-five minutes it is skinned, cleaned and cut up. In the cutting-up knives of many sorts and sizes are used, some curved like a corn-reaper. Some men wear a leather guard enveloping the forearm and a mailed-steel glove on the left hand. Russians, Germans, Poles, Irish, and Czechs are among the butchers using those knives with infinitely more speed and dexterity than I use this typewriter. Those who are cutting hogs dip the knife constantly into boiling water to keep the steel hot. Hour after hour flash those knives; nobody sings, nobody, so far as I could see, even speaks. Negroes work along-

side the rest. It is swift, skilful and neat as it can be made. I was interested to see it, but very glad to be outside again. My guide spoke with enthusiasm of the white-faced Herefords which, to-day, are "built on the ground"—and a delight to the butcher's eye. The hog and the steer have, in fact, been bred into a new shape and build to answer man's demands; the long horns and long legs have gone. And the pioneer in this trade, the first Swift? He was a boy named Gustavus Franklin Swift who, when aged sixteen in 1855, wanted to leave home to try his fortune. His father, to keep him at home, lent him 20 dollars. But the boy bought a neighbour's heifer for 19 dollars, killed and dressed it and sold the meat along the sandy roads of Cape Cod, netting 10 dollars profit. Mr. Swift is one of the early examples of The American Story.

America's newspapermen are among its best people. One took me round the stockyards and meat plant. His name was Charlie. He told me his surname, but emphasised he was Charlie; so Charlie he was. His newspaper is short-handed owing to the war, so he works as a reporter from 6.30 a.m. till about noon and as a photographer thenceforward—maybe till 10 p.m. I said: "I hope you get two men's wages." He replied that he did. Until he was about eighteen years old, Charlie worked on a ranch, and a ranch, as he drily explained, is not *one* acre, as it may be in California, but from 500 acres upwards. Charlie pays as much as 25 dollars for his Stetson hat and occasionally he still wears a cowboy's riding boots. Everybody appears to do this who works off and on with cattle, whether he any longer rides a horse or not. One sees men standing even at the city street corner wearing these delicate little boots with pointed toes and high heels—boots with almost a feminine touch about them. Those boots, says Charlie, may run anything from 25 to 300 dollars a pair. The Texan, you'll see, is mighty particular on hats and boots. The rest of his attire doesn't matter so much.

Looking over the stockyard, we came on a group of old bulls, waiting their turn for the factory. I said I found it a bit pathetic—those old gentlemen standing there blinking their eyes in the sun and wind, recking nothing of what to-morrow will bring. Charlie grinned. "I guess they've had a lot o' fun in their time," he said. As for the killing—well, the job was a job. "It's all a question of food—no worse and no different from pulling up a radish." To the stockyards for slaughter there comes occasionally a milking cow which a foraging dairyman may

light on and buy dirt cheap and take away, saved from the killer. We saw one or two men walking along the top of the pen-rail looking down on the cattle, searching for hidden treasure among them. Charlie and I drove round the outskirts of Fort Worth, passing once or twice a group of poor shacks. "Guess they're squatters," he said. "They come along—don't suppose they know who owns the land they're on, nor I don't suppose they care." In the middle of a group of out-houses was tethered a fine horse, riches amidst poverty. "Reckon he'll think more o' that horse than his kids," said Charlie.

I asked a man how the Negroes get along working with the whites—for here I'm in the Deep South. "Right enough," was the answer. "We don't stand no nonsense from 'em here. *This is the South.*" In the meat factory I was told that the Negroes doing the killing would get about 35 dollars a week. Killing, it seems, isn't reckoned a highly skilled job, though I should have thought it was. Negroes in Detroit factories get nearly twice as much as that—which gives point to the statement made to me by a newspaperman who said: "Inequality is largely a question of economics. Most of the Negroes are depressed, do jobs that don't earn so much, and, just as you don't mix with 'poor whites,' you don't mix with poor Negroes, either." That's one side. I'm aware of my ignorance on this problem, but I don't find it pleasant to walk along a railway platform and see the black people going off like untouchables to their own coaches. I suspect also that this treatment makes them rude sometimes, when they get the chance to be. Travelling to Dallas, my coach was next to the Negro coach. My bags were all parked near the door. We had a Negro porter travelling in the coach. When we came to get out, the door, previously open, was locked, and we had to traverse the coach. I had to make two journeys with my bags. I asked the Negro porter if he could bring the remainder of them along. He didn't. Maybe it wasn't his job. I don't know.

An American business man I met was immensely tickled that his office is bigger and handsomer than Winston Churchill's. As for Bracken's, which he had also seen—Bracken's was nothing at all. "To-morrow I'll do a deal for 65,000 dollars," he said. "Now, you English—you wouldn't do it so quick. You're probably wise—but we Americans—we just go ahead and do it. I put my boy through the mill—made him learn what a dollar

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means—later on, I gave him a thousand dollars and a car because he didn't ask me for a car."

March 2nd, 1944.

There's a lofty building in Dallas with two red horses on top which turn with the wind. I'm told: "That's just to prove this isn't a one-horse town." Dallas and Fort Worth are rivals, Dallas proud of its banking, modernity, swift growth. I saw here the most up-to-date bank office I've come across: escalator from door to the first floor; the first floor rimmed with tellers' seats behind glass, each space bearing the bank clerk's name. Customers' writing desks of glass. Marble, glass, mahogany everywhere. The bank was closed. Why? "Texas's Independence Day," I was told. There's a road sign in Texas: "This is God's own country. Don't drive through it like hell."

A move is afoot to develop five Southern states industrially—they are Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, Louisiana.

I spent an animated and enjoyable two or three hours in the *Dallas Morning News* office, a journal that is a good friend of Anglo-American relations. I was cross-examined a good deal—were we in England for the brotherhood of man, as (they said) they are in Dallas? What did Churchill mean by saying he won't liquidate the British Empire? Was I in favour of internationalising Hong-Kong? Was it true Churchill was opposed to an invasion of Europe, as rumour had it? I replied that we in England have more cause than they in Dallas to favour the brotherhood of mankind, since we cannot stand alone in an aggressive and wicked world, that I as a Radical don't favour liquidating the Empire, either. Did they? I was personally, I said, in agreement with putting Hong-Kong under control of something like the League of Nations—and also America's bases, too; there must be universality in this sort of move. As for Churchill being against the Second Front, in my view that was complete nonsense. I asked: Did people in Dallas know what the war was about? Did they feel it in the pits of their stomachs? A leader-writer said: "Texas knows more than most people in America." When this talk ended, I ran into another editor who said he was one of the first Anglophiles, but if Churchill didn't do something about India and about China, then . . . And he shook his head. He repeated he was an Anglophile, but added that he could take me to people not very far away who are not.

What emerges, I think, is that in the friendliest quarters there's a little suspicion, some criticism and some misconception.



In a private talk, I raised the Negro question. No educated and progressive Southerner can be easy in mind on this; nor was this university graduate. He said both his grandfathers were slave-owners; the South had responsibility for bringing Negroes to America and therefore for taking care of them. But after having Negroes in his house for fifteen years, he doesn't believe they are the equals of whites. "Intelligence varies with colour. Many mulattoes live under worse conditions than Negroes, yet they're more intelligent." I said: "There's not much encouragement to be intelligent if you know you won't be able to make use of it when you've developed it. More equality and more responsibility would breed intelligence." He didn't deny there's a good deal in that. In Dallas, he said, more toleration is being shown on both sides. A bus line picks up Negroes in one place, whites in another, more Negroes in a third. The bus has its divisions for blacks and whites, but those divisions are not rigidly observed as they were fifteen or twenty years ago. He was an honest man. He said: "We lost the Civil War and we took it out on the nigger." He granted, too, that, often enough, reason and justice say one thing and emotions and upbringing say another.

In this newspaper-office I talked across his desk with Mr. G. B. Dealey, who was born in Manchester, England, eighty-five years ago, and came to America when he was eleven years old. He has served this paper for seventy years, and has long been its chief. His brain is extremely alert, he keeps his Lancashire sense of humour ("I always say I've been here so long because nobody else ever offered me a job"), gets the *Manchester Guardian* sent out, and still looks like a Lancashireman—a grey eye, fresh complexion, and a clipped white moustache. He talked of the danger of men getting "the big head." All dictators get it, he said; even Woodrow Wilson got it, and he went up and hit the ceiling. He wondered how Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill really got on. I said: "At all events there are fundamental reasons why they should admire one another—they've all got courage, they're all fighters, they've got immense physical energy, and they've got common enemies; moreover, they all like a drink."

A wealthy American woman to me: "Have you seen this *Readers' Digest* article on the American invasion of Britain? We're making a terrible impression over there, owing to differences in pay and what-not." This is an honest article

written by an American saying that English folk find the American lavishness in giving medals overdone and touched with Hollywood. He mentions that the American soldier draws four times the pay of the British Tommy, and that the U.S. soldier has his pockets filled with oranges and candy in an island where the richest English are denied such luxuries.

*March 31d, 1944.*

Mr. Campbell Russell, our Vice-Consul in Dallas, a man approaching seventy, but looking ten years younger, drove me over to Terrell Airfield, where numbers of our R.A.F. are training to be pilots. The countryside might have been Essex—a trifle rolling, but without much interest. "We've the blackest earth and the whitest people," say the Texans. But they pull their own legs, too, saying: "We've the biggest hats, but the least amount under them; the furthest miles, but the least to see." Terrell is almost a one-street city; yes, it's called a city—one of the many facets of American life that tickle our lads. I talked for an hour or two with a dozen of our senior cadets—among them two former policemen, four or five engineers, two men articled to solicitors, a secondary school teacher and so on. Two or three were thirty-one or thirty-two years old. We're now getting as pilots a cross-section of British life. Among the students at this school have been a bricklayer, a plumber, a joiner, a railway clerk, a fish-fryer, a sheet-metal worker, and a locomotive engineer. Mixed with these was a peer, who when he went to supper with American hosts, washed the pots, thereby causing much astonishment to his American hosts. Until lately, the air cadets training here have been 80 per cent. British and 20 per cent. American. The Americans are not to come in the future, for the reason that schools for training American pilots have reached a peak, and some seventeen airfields or so are to be shut down. But it is a pity to withdraw this batch of Americans, for they and our English lads are getting along finely, each learning from the other, both liking one another.

This training school began before America was in the war—an example of her early help to us. Our lads came over in civilian clothes and were told to bring a warm civilian overcoat. They arrived in a Texas June, boiling hot! This school—the first of several—has trained many hundreds of British pilots, and most of the work has been done by American civilians, as it is to-day. Only seven R.A.F. officers are here and a handful of N.C.Os. The cadets take much of their own responsibility—the senior

course, for example, has a cadet wing-commander, cadet squadron-leaders, cadet flight-lieutenants; they wear the badges in white tape on their shoulder-straps. The cadet wing-commander at the moment was formerly a mobile policeman. This giving of responsibility to cadets, and the fact that a man must do a good deal towards disciplining himself, has made a profound impression on the American cadets I spoke to. One said—and two or three alongside him agreed: "It's different from our own Army training; we're used to being told, 'Do this' or 'Study that'—somebody is behind us all the time. But here—well, you please yourself more what you do—it's up to you. We like it fine—it gives you more sense of responsibility—raises your morale, or so we think, anyway." The American cadets have done, as a rule, about fifty to eighty hours' more actual primary flying than the British cadets when the course begins, but by the end, when wings are awarded to the successful, there's not much to choose. Our lads are impressed by the Americans' precision flying; the Americans are impressed by our thorough training in navigation. I asked a dozen British cadets how they got along with the Americans. They said at once: "Couldn't be better." They're tickled by many things—say that the Americans eat three times as much, and such mixtures, too—jam with meat, cheese flakes sprinkled over peaches! And at first they thought drinking milk by adults was strange. They have picked up U.S.A. slang—"ships" for aircraft, a "ground loop" when the aircraft spins round on the ground—and they're struck by different pronunciations, "levver-arm" for "lever-arm," "address" for "address." They say the American girls are very friendly—they'll come and speak to them—yet they're not forward. If our lads suddenly find themselves with a night free—open-post—a queue lines up at the telephones calling up girls. One said: "I feel a bit humiliated to be driven back by a girl in her car—it's the wrong way round." In the school's early days two cadets married American girls. That is discouraged now, but one cadet got engaged here recently. Our men are playing Soccer—they've found a team of Mexicans who're good, and a team of American civilians, too. Both teams they find rather temperamental: "We have to be careful how we play. When they're losing, they get more temperamental still. One Mexican took a running kick at the referee." They find it strange, too, to have their opponents sending substitutes on the field when a man gets hurt or even gets tired; quite usually three or four substitutes are used. They're tickled by the way girls of sixteen drive their own cars, and use make-up

and have their "dates," and by the fashion office girls hail their boss "Buster" or some name like that. I asked if our men had put on weight as the result of the excellent food. One boy of eighteen said he had gained 12 lb., but the others said No, they had lost rather than gained—they laughed and said it was through worrying over passing the examinations.

The British cadets wear blue R.A.F. battle-dress. One said: "When we got to New York people thought we were German prisoners of war. (A shout of laughter at this.) Others come and ask if we are coastguards or marines." A squadron-leader confirmed this. At Washington Railway Station, an old lady asked him to carry her bag to the train—thought him a porter. Having a sense of humour, he carried it, too. The same squadron-leader helped me with my bags to the train when I was leaving. It's a country station—50 yards of platform and about half a mile of train. Nobody knew where my coach was. We lumbered along the track, heavily laden, while Pullman porters waved us on, but nobody attempted to help us. Finally, we threw them on to the train, and I clambered up. We were bawled out by a Pullman porter for keeping the train waiting, a man who had certainly no idea he was addressing a squadron-leader of the R.A.F. We made (I trust) a suitable reply.

The American cadets, for their part, find it strange and inexplicable and also amusing that two English lads can pass one another on a narrow piece of concrete and not speak; and that when an American lad, passing three English ones, says, "How are you doing?" the English lad he knows will answer, but the other two will stare right ahead! They find our subtle sense of humour beyond them. But they like our lads well. A boy from Arizona told me he was taking three English lads home on leave—they would hitch-hike 800 miles; another, a Scandinavian, said his buddy was British; they were always together, talking technical stuff to American chaps about training. And it's not only the U.S. cadets who like our men; the chief American flying instructor spoke with enthusiasm—said that they were not so nonchalant as the Americans; and the U.S. ground instructor said their boys have something to learn from our men in real courtesy; one ground instructor is a cripple; never once had our boys failed to help him through doors, etc. (By the way, the U.S. cadets told me the competition to come to this British school is very great. Some 500 wanted to come—only a few were able to do so.)

The U.S. flying instructor was amusing on his own training. He had had an English instructor, and he, the American, had

misjudged distance and was coming down too soon. He said: "I thought I'd wait and see what the instructor did. All he said was: 'I say, Roderick, old man, let's try and land in the bloody f—— aerodrome.'" I said: "What would you have said in similar circumstances?" He replied: "Put a little coal on and land in the goddam field," but he didn't think he'd have been so calm about it as the Englishman was.

I saw the Stars and Stripes and the R.A.F. flag hauled down at sunset. The cadets parade together, the U.S. men mixed with ours, the U.S. lads in brown leather jackets and peaked caps. The Stars and Stripes used to be handled with more formality than our flag, but our men have now copied the Americans. I saw an American cadet, keen on fencing, teaching a British lad the foils; I watched them sprinting together and doing P.T. together. Nothing finer for our good relationship could be imagined. Whenever leave comes round, it's seldom that an English lad is short of a home to go to. Time was when American cars were lined up at the gate to take them out at the day's end. If that happens less often now, the cordiality is no less.

I saw American girls teaching cadets the link trainer and was told: "They're more conscientious and more reliable than men who did it."

A British cadet talked recently with a German prisoner of war who is confident New York doesn't exist—that it is bombed out of sight. He declared he was taken by a circuitous route to avoid the city.

When the American cadets have finished their training, they get two medals—a good conduct medal and a medal for having been in contact with Allied troops. Recently two U.S. Army doctors went into Mexico to attend a venereal disease conference. They got medals for doing so—presumably for service outside their own country.

The vagaries in Texas climate are notorious. The officer commanding remembers a night when temperature dropped 80° in twelve hours. Will Rogers used to say: "If you don't like our climate, wait a minute"—but this is a witticism used in other parts of America, too.

This flying school has a song, which strikes now and then the right British note of satire (written by Flight-Lieutenant M. W. Palmer):

*"We're the Boys of No. 1 B.F.T.S.,  
To our country's call we bravely answered, Yes.  
Crossing oceans at our peril, we have landed here in Terrell,  
And what we think of Terrell you can guess."*

Again:

*"We polish every button till we shine like Barbara Hutton,  
But there's no roast beef or mutton, and it's hard, you must confess.  
We've had the barbecues, the gumbo and the grils,  
The Pabst, and the Budweiser and the Schlitz,  
But our craving is most vocal  
For a bitter at the local."*

Again:

*"And though flying is the thing we're here to do,  
We don't forget we're propaganda too,  
So 'neath starry spangled banners, we're so careful of our manners,  
We're the Boys of No. 1 B.F.T.S."*

They've devised a school badge, too, with the inscription,  
*Mare nos dividit sed cæla conjungunt.*

Remarks in camp:

"Did you hear of the two Texas mosquitoes who captured the flight-lieutenant and carried him off? One mosquito said: 'Let's take him home.' The other said: 'No, if we do that, the Big Fellas will take him away from us.'"

"Nobody can tell which cadets will distinguish themselves in action. We had one who won the Victoria Cross—seemed an ordinary chap when he was here."

A Jewish doctor of medicine complained to me that we British have stopped the quota of Jews entering Palestine, and this at a time when Jews are being exterminated in Europe and getting to Palestine was their only hope. I said it wasn't correct to say the quota had been closed; on the contrary, the time period had been extended that the quota might be filled. But once the quota was filled, was it any more fair to thrust the Jews on to the Muslims of Palestine than it was to thrust them, say, on the Texans? There is, I said, infinitely more room in Texas and California and Alaska than in Palestine. He said: "But you know that our immigration has been stopped here for years."

I said that might be so, but now was a time to open the door again. He said: "But you must know how much anti-Semitism there is in America. If you have read *Under Cover* . . ." I said maybe the Muslims in Palestine are a little anti-Semitic, too. Would there not be fighting in Palestine between Muslims and Jews if we did what the Jews ask? "Don't imagine," I said, "that I am against the Jews. My publisher is a Jew and my solicitor is a Jew. I wrote to Herbert Morrison, our Home Secretary, six months ago saying if ever there was a time to let more Jewish children enter England, now is that time. Have you written to your President, and if not, why not?" I said the Jews are holding meetings in America denouncing the British; I hoped they were equally denouncing the Americans, for this was a world problem, not a problem only for Palestine, since, anyhow, Palestine would never hold all the refugees from Europe. He said: "But we Jews here cannot denounce America. We should be told to get out if we don't like America." I said: "If you cease to attack your Government when it is wrong, then there's an end of democracy. If there's one country in the world which has been kind to Jews and a refuge for them, it is Britain. I take a poor view of your attacking us at this time. I think we might do more, and I've said so. But America can do far more than we can. Even if Palestine took all the Jews you want her to, that would not solve the problem."

A woman friend assured me that her hairdresser has just given a permanent wave to a child aged two and a half.

*March 4th, 1944.*

Last night in Terrell it was so warm that it reminded me of Rangoon. To-day is infinitely colder—a keen wind blows this morning. But spring is on the way. The érêpe myrtle is bursting into flower, a lovely delicate purple. As I rode south towards New Orleans past the first oil wells I had seen—slender metal towers standing thickly about the countryside higgledy-piggledy—I saw trees here and there snowy with bloom, and at last a tree filled with flowers resembling tulips and shining in the sun. The grass grows steadily more green.

My Irish friend in New York writes me again on some aspects of American life and chides me for being critical. He says he believes that one grows nobly like what one loves and ignobly like what one hates. "There is a wide gulf," he says, "between the ideas that have formed national thought in England and here and

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the merits and defects of both countries spring from this. England has always been an imperial country, having grabbed country all over the world. It has given her on the good side a world sense, the feeling that she is involved in what happens elsewhere. On the bad side it has made her a property-conscious country, for what made England rich was the development of others' resources, and no matter how you do this you do damage to the other fellow and sometimes he's bound to realise it. This country has always by traditional thought been aloof, and the result is on the bad side that there has always been the idea that what happens elsewhere is none of our business. On the good side, when we do go into international matters, we attack problems with a sense of idealism and altruism that England couldn't possibly bring."

Now there is much good sense in what he says. But it's time U.S.A. abandoned her aloofness; she's been an unconscionably long time in learning she cannot escape her responsibilities, if indeed she has, as a whole, yet learnt that inescapable fact.

*March 6th, 1944.*

After a day in New Orleans, I like the city. It's a little shabby and very old-fashioned, and I like it for those things. Yesterday, a Sunday, I walked down to the water-front and watched two great old ferries of *Showboat* vintage and twice the size puffing across the muddy stream yellow-brown in colour and with much floating timber and logwood in it. A medley of ships' chandlers and coffee bars and oyster-shops along the streets; tram-cars; lots of Negroes; touches of poverty and of faded, ancient splendour. Late at night I walked past the hospital. One sign says "White Visitors," another "Colored Visitors." Blacks in Louisiana do not vote, though they do in Memphis. When a theatre here showed, not long ago, *Cabin in the Sky* indignant whites talked of boycotting the theatre for good. Racism is a ticklish problem here. A newspaper editor I sat with to-day took a news story out of his waste-paper basket: it told how the U.S. Army authorities have bought 50,000 copies of a pamphlet on racial problems—and decided not to distribute them. This editor isn't printing this news, lest it should stir up strife. The problem is kept out of the journal's letter-column, too. The Civil War may be a hundred years old, but it is very much alive here. He conceded that Negroes often live in appalling houses at rents too high and under white landlords, and that, although he detests the New Deal, one good thing it did was to build homes for Negroes.



Some 70 per cent. of New Orleans folk are Catholics; some of its wealthiest citizens are Jews; others prominent in the city are Italians. A colony with French origin holds picturesque *salons*, where the old and middle-aged speak French, where French songs are sung, French poems and essays read, but where the young folk often speak American as rich in flavour as anybody else. Not unnaturally, perhaps, in a city so Catholic, Russia is looked at askance. Few Russian films have been shown. A rumour arising out of the Teheran Conference is talked of in circles which believe themselves well-informed. This rumour says that Stalin placed before Roosevelt and Churchill the offer Hitler had made of what Russia might keep if she stopped fighting, and that Stalin asked these two how far they were prepared to "raise it"—meaning give to Russia even more. The story is that Churchill wasn't ready to concede any more, but that Roosevelt was. Now the same circles that suspect Russia also dislike Mr. Roosevelt, and the rumour is being used to damage the President in this election year. Another curious effect results, that, as Mr. Roosevelt is damaged, a more cordial feeling is engendered towards Churchill and England. (More commonly the situation has been that the President has been thought to be in Mr. Churchill's waistcoat pocket, a view that has done neither the President nor ourselves any good.) Most wealthy folk detest the New Deal, asserting Roosevelt bought his support with dollars paid to Negroes and to the depressed classes, and that he has damaged America infinitely by his methods. A cultivated man who detests the Administration said to me: "There's more double-dealing in this country to-day than ever before. I believe Roosevelt is incapable of truth, and that he'll never hesitate to lie himself out of any predicament, or go to any lengths to keep office." He spoke quietly and with deliberation.

A newspaper publisher said to me: "We've more money in the bank than ever before and, after paying all our taxes, we have more left than ever we had before."

From the roof of the Pickwick Club, I looked over New Orleans, stretching ten or fifteen miles from end to end, at the twisting water down which a grey ship was making her way to sea, at the green trees and bushes already beginning to look lush. A high, moist wind was blowing, the sun so bright we needed sun-glasses.

I called to mind Walt Whitman's—

*"O Magnet South! O glittering, perfumed South! My South!  
O quick mettle, rich blood, impulse and love! good and evil!"*

March 7th, 1944.

So short is Scotch whisky that a man recently advertised the contents of his electric kitchen, including a washing machine—and washing machines are scarce—in exchange for a case of whisky.

This has been a perfect day—like an early English June. The humid warmth of yesterday has gone. The grass in the campus at Dillard University, where I went this afternoon, is greener than I've seen since I left home. Azaleas are out. An old editor I met this morning wore white silk socks. What could be more encouraging? I lunched at Antoine's, where folk first lunched a hundred and twenty-four years ago. There's the Rex Room, the Mystery Room, and a room whose walls are hung with portraits and cartoons and cuttings from journals extolling the house's virtues. I was the guest of a lawyer and politician who told an amusing tale of the Negro girl who had a man up for theft. "The sum was ten dollars, Judge. Yes, Judge. Where'd I keep it, Judge? In my stocking, Judge. How'd he come to steal it from there? Why, Judge, I jus' didn' know that was what he was after, Judge." He knows both Wendell Willkie and Thomas Dewey. Willkie at fifty-two he describes an engaging character, able to answer questions right off; Dewey at forty-two is stiff, upright in character, but unpractised in political charm. Willkie had parents both lawyers. Dewey, so far as I can see, is the Greta Garbo of Presidential candidates—publicity by withdrawal. No doubt at all that he desires to be President. My host spoke of fishing expeditions sixteen miles distant where Negroes are poor, clad in little more than rags, unable to use a telephone. No white American I have met in the South goes any distance towards wanting true equality with Negroes. Treating them as children is, many think, the kindly way. A brakeman on my train was insistent that—"we don't mistreat them; I treat them with respect—but don't have to do with 'em socially." (This was a kindly soul who leapt off at a station to buy me a cigar he recommended. Could you imagine an English railwayman making you a gift like that? You could not.) In Louisiana no person with a drop of Negro blood can marry a white—against the law. As a Negro,

you may have your doctorate at a university, but you can't vote—no, sir. Such a man described to me how the system works. "Every year," he said, "I try to register as a voter. I queue up, am given a form, fill it up. Where it says 'race' I write 'Negro.' The official gives it back to me. 'You have filled it up wrong,' he says. Gives me another form. I fill it up again as before. He looks at it; tears it up. Says: 'Come back to-morrow.' Another plan is to give me a piece of print and ask me to read it aloud—this is a test under the *Code Napoléon*. He says: 'Read that and interpret it.' I read it, but he says my interpretation is wrong—*any* interpretation I give he'll pronounce wrong; and so he refuses to register me. The more intelligent I seem, the more certain it is that he won't register me." He was a distinguished Negro who told me that. There's no hotel in New Orleans where he would be admitted, and hardly a restaurant. We were talking at Dillard University for Negroes, where some 350 young people, mostly girls to-day, are students. A degree in the arts is given; many graduates become teachers, some go to science, or medicine, or dentistry, or nursing. Some, in despair at the lack of equality in opportunity, give up and embark on one or other of the rackets, business or otherwise. He said it isn't always easy to instil philosophy and a degree of patience into young men if they're fired by injustice. But no matter how long reforms are in coming, he didn't anticipate any riots or violence in New Orleans. 'They'd go on enduring. I said it might take fifty years or it might take hundreds of years, but I felt in my bones that the equality they seek will come at last; progress is made in the end. He said: "Yes; I expect no millennium, but this war takes on a colour aspect more and more. It is our job to develop the best sides to our democracy and show what the war is really about." He was an honest man, I think. He didn't pretend all Negroes are perfect; he spoke of slave-owning Negroes in the old days, of *bourgeois* Negroes to-day, of seeing a Negro woman whose own people had never been slaves shepherding her own offspring away from other children whose ancestors had been slaves and calling those children *canaille*. He spoke with pride of Negro girls so fair and white that they work in New Orleans stores as though they are white, yet return at night to the Negro community—said that he knows only one such girl who has gone over entirely to the whites. Of Louisiana Negroes, he estimates 20 per cent. are illiterate, 10 per cent. pretty well educated, and of the 70 per cent. in between, 40 per cent. are anxious to learn and educate them-

selves and get on in the world. He thought progress in the Deep South will be slow—partly because the average American, in his view, doesn't really understand the full import of this war, and is ready to return quite happily to the America of just before Pearl Harbour. He himself was in the last war, and he doesn't believe that Americans have entered this war with the crusading spirit they showed in the last war. He made two other interesting points about Negroes—the strange fact that it is only in their *homes* that whites of the South will rub shoulders with Negroes quite calmly and pleasantly; and that, of course, they have their babies nursed by them. A Negro may nurse their baby, but she mayn't sit in the same compartment in the omnibus! Again, that while in the North there's equality in theory, the North can humiliate, too. A Negro goes to buy a theatre ticket. Alas! all the seats are full. A moment later a white buys a seat.

Several folk—and those who on other subjects are very fair-minded—have spoken to me with bitterness of Mrs. Roosevelt encouraging the Negroes and “making things difficult.”

A phrase is used here—“Nigger-minded”—meaning difficult or obstructive or stupid. Negroes, of course, can be insolent and what the British Army calls “dumbly insolent,” too.

Last night in my hotel a Roman Catholic priest addressed 200 women on Russia. He had nothing good to say of Stalin or of Russia. Stalin's name was not Stalin, he said, but some unpronounceable name which made the women titter when he tried to say it; Stalin, he said, once robbed a bank at Tiflis. But the priest shied off from a question as to whether he thought Lend-Lease to Russia should be stopped.

*March 9th, 1944.*

I drove out on this beautiful day to look at a sugar refinery fifty miles out of New Orleans. A leisurely day, too, in which the spirit was quiet. I was very tired, though. Street-cars run all hours of the twenty-four in New Orleans, and my bedroom is never empty of noise.

The countryside is flat. New Orleans is built on swampy ground—indeed, it's something of a miracle that it is built at all. Many buildings rest on piles driven into the ground or on a layer of shell—shell created, I believe, by sea animals originally. Moreover, the Mississippi is often higher than the land nearby, so that the dead are buried on the surface of the

ground. A bank called a levee is raised some 20 feet along the river, and alongside this bank I drove for thirty or forty miles; the view on the left was blotted out. My companion talked of a day in New Orleans when it rained 23 inches in twenty-four hours, and another day when it rained 12 inches. This is subtropics, right enough. The wisteria is already out and azaleas are blooming. "Everything comes out too quickly here," he said. We began to ride past Negro shacks, grey and washed-looking, as though cricket pavilions stood there wanting a coat of paint. But nobody was to be seen. Quite rarely a Negro was working in a field hoeing. Sugar-cane fields were empty save for dry stubble. Twice we passed a fine house that might have occupied a place in an old plantation story—a house with palms in front and magnolia trees and oak; the houses were large and square, with a fine veranda of carved woodwork and ironwork—a dollish, story-book appearance. But these also wore a deserted air. This neighbourhood is lived in mostly by people of French origin: French names are on the houses—Emile Hotard, and again Maurin's Theatre. (An Irish doctor relates to me how German or Dutch names a century ago were twisted because French priests couldn't catch the true names—Jacques Schneider became Schexnayder; and he cited other examples; but how much is Irish blarney, I'm not sure.) The sugar refinery was started eight years ago by a Frenchman, Leon Godchaux. To-day it produces 2,000,000 lb. of sugar a day. There are twenty-three parts of this process, and personally, when following them through, I only came to life, so to speak, when watching the liquid boil in a vacuum pan two or three times my height and seven or eight times my width. Through portholes you could see the liquid bubbling; the boilerman used a metal rod to draw a little of the sugar from the pan, turned what he drew on to a slide and placed it under the microscope for us to see. It had all the colour of autumn in it. "You must put a little sugar in to act as seed," said my companion, "and you must then build up the grain."

An agreeable smell of treacle or burnt sugar assaults your nose when you walk into the refinery. Although so much work is done, there was at times an absence of bustle, and I climbed up and down stairs and traversed rooms when we were almost alone. The walls looked slender, much iron and metal sheet or glass. About 60 per cent. of the workers are Negroes. Wages run from 40 cents to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars an hour, the latter earned by mechanics. When I asked how the Negro workers get along,

I was told: "They take no thought for the morrow. At one time we paid wages on Thursday, but many then failed to turn up on the Friday. Now we pay on Friday, and"—this with a wry smile—"they start to come back the following Tuesday."

Later, the advice of a sugar plantation overseer was repeated to me: "Be just with a Negro. If you make a promise, keep it. But do him no favours. He won't appreciate it—he'll think he has it coming to him, anyhow." This is exactly what is said in Cairo by Britishers of the Worthy Oriental Gentlemen (Wogs). I wonder if it is deserving of such universal application?

We drove on to look at an old plantation house, and crossed the Mississippi by ferry. Great quietness. The old ferryman wore a black cowboy hat shielding a face seamed like oak. What times did the ferry run? Oh, he'd no "skedule." Under us rolled the muddy, yellow river; on either side the levee, on which a few bony cattle grazed. Trees were hung with Spanish moss, as though a great company of rags, blown on the wind, had caught in the branches. We came upon "Eleonore's Beauty Shoppe" in a wooden hut. We lunched in a wayside restaurant and ate gumbo, a soup with oysters and a chicken leg in it—quite delicious. Madame was a grey-eyed, broad-bosomed woman, her ancestors French, but she herself using a true American accent. We spoke for a moment of the war. In 1940, she said, she used to say to her daughter: "Why do you listen to the raddio? Turn it off. It isn't *our* war." Why didn't the Russians fight the Japs, they wanted to know. I tried to explain why—they've enough on their hands as yet. Maybe later they would fight, I said; I hoped so.

The plantation house has been restored. ("Five million bats in when we took it," said its owner.) In front of the house lies an avenue of old, spreading oaks, oaks remindful of Sherwood Forest, beneath which an English officer has written that he sat in 1860. The smell of orange blossom was strong in the garden. Jasmine was budding. A heavy drowsiness was abroad; no birds were singing.

We drove back; in some fields the baby shoots of sugar-cane were a yellow-green. "Should frost catch them," said my companion, "the shoots burst open and the juice turns sour—turns to vinegar." But I don't think frost will catch them now. The day continued brilliant, the sky was clear, the wind had life in it. Suddenly, I saw on the roadside a lovely girl in a red jacket,

green tight trousers, and white knee boots. She might have walked off a poster advertising Eire, but she hadn't. She was as real as the Negroes coming home from school with the nebs of their caps turned up like a Doughboy's.

March 10th, 1944.

*"This is the first month of spring,  
Spring brings the wind  
That sails the kites;  
Spring opens the buds  
And makes the birds sing."*

This was written on a blackboard in a Negro school for small children—and bigger children—I was in to-day. For lunch they had had three oysters each, rice and gravy, salad, and a glass of milk. It happened to be five o'clock when I left—very young children were waiting for their mothers to fetch them after work. Well over half their mothers are in domestic or other service. This is a fundamental of the Negro problem—the economic side to it. Pre-war Negro women in New Orleans earned, said the head-teacher, 3 to 8 dollars a week in households. To-day, many earn 12 dollars. Negro wages for men were low before the war, so that their wives had to work, too. (The same thing was true of men and women cotton-weavers in Lancashire and of some industrial workers in parts of Scotland.)

The head-teacher, a Negress, was a pleasant, able and sensitive woman. I had said that I was struck by the fact that a number of Negroes, at all events, seem to enjoy life more than whites do. She smiled a little sadly; didn't think it is true of the *younger* Negroes. "They are thinking too much," she said. "All life, and each day, and from morning till night, is a question mark. Not long ago we had a meeting and discussion, but the only man who joked was an *old* Negro. The young folk are too troubled, too full of questions. You'll hear a group of young Negroes saying: 'These Four Freedoms—they don't apply to us.' " She spoke with feeling of the need for the home life of her people to be founded on security and good religion, so that the children can feel safe; she doesn't want jobs to be known as Negro jobs; she spoke with sorrow of one of her young women teachers being wrongfully arrested because the white man who took her to the patrol-man couldn't, or wouldn't, take the trouble to distinguish one Negro from another.

Now it is no doubt quite easy to be too sentimental over

Negroes. It is a danger in sympathetic people that they invest minority groups with all the virtues. A friend of mine heard a Negress "ticking off" a white counter-hand in a store in a manner that was astonishing. Yet there's no doubt that Negroes are made to feel that they are not as white folk are; and there's no doubt, either, that a lot of Americans filled with the most liberal sentiments on India and places far from home, are not liberal in their own States. But this, of course, is a weakness in human nature not confined to America.

American moron story: "A little moron carpenter kept picking up nails and putting them on one side in disgust. His friend said: 'What's the matter with 'em?' 'The heads are all on the wrong end,' said the first. 'Well,' said the second, 'go round the building and use 'em on the other side—they'll be all right there.'"

I met some young British girls who came over during the Blitz and have spent three years here. Their American hosts have been most generous—indeed, they've given them more clothes than they can wear. One of the first purchases when they got here was ten evening gowns for each girl. To-day one girl has seventeen pullovers. The fashion is to buy men's pull-overs, which envelop the girls.

American name for fireflies: "Lightning bugs."

Sidelight on war:

A British officer who has been working in Chicago said to me: "A schools inspector drove me out to a rural area on business. We passed a high school outside which a number of motor-cars were drawn up. The schools inspector said that one of his problems is that of high school boys who now work during evenings in munitions plants. They work from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., and do a few hours also on two afternoons a week. They earn 30 to 40 dollars a week. Result: they often fail to turn up at school, and, of course, have far more money than is good for them."

An Englishwoman said: "I think the American girl makes a better housewife than does the English girl. She runs her home beautifully, though she no doubt needs a lot of money to do it."



I talked to-day with a prominent New Orleans banker. He said that isolationism is not dead, but only sleeping—that he is afraid it may become powerful again. He sees Anglo-American co-operation as the world's hope; if that fails, then we're lost. "We shall be strong competitors, of course, but that must not prevent us working together. I can see outlets for greater trade between us, opportunities in America for more of your chinaware, and for more woollen goods." I asked if he believes we can avoid a slump after post-war prosperity has had its run. He said we can minimise it, and make the interval before a depression begins a longer interval. But that he was afraid some depression will eventually occur. Similarly, he did not think wars would ever be entirely abolished, but we could make the intervals between them longer—perhaps we could make the interval a hundred years. As to the immediate post-war period, the first months after fighting ends will be difficult indeed, but we are making preparations and looking ahead in a way that we didn't look ahead last time; there will be some temporary unemployment, but it ought not to be large. We can cushion that difficult period. He said it has been stated that about 128 different groups in America are studying the problem and trying to make ready.

Item of war history: When Hess flew to Britain in his Messerschmitt 110, he arrived near Glasgow on the second night of the Glasgow Blitz. Hess was chased by a British night-fighter, who thought at first he was a bomber, but Hess's aircraft was so fast it outpaced our two-seater Defiant. The R.A.F. shot down thirty-four enemy bombers during those two nights of Blitz—a record, I think, up to that time.

An American reporter on the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* has been investigating how much income tax he would pay in Britain on an income of 3,600 dollars if he had two children. It comes to 857.50 dollars. In America he pays less than one-fourth of that—namely, 211.77 dollars.

I spoke yesterday to the Pickwick Club on the need for fundamental facts being known in order that our Anglo-U.S.A. relationship should be put on its right basis, and I gave some figures of relative casualties and said that on the other hand few in Britain know how large a part was played in the convoys to Murmansk and Archangel by American ships and American

crews. The day before I spoke to the Army and Navy Club—forty or fifty officers—in much the same terms.

By the way, on city loans in Louisiana no income tax is paid. These loans are so popular that they stand at a high premium—so high that net yield has fallen to about 1.4 per cent.

The United States has sent a note to De Valera asserting that Eire is a base for Axis spies and that this espionage imperils thousands of American soldiers' lives in the Second Front invasion. The note asks that German and Japanese diplomats should be expelled. De Valera refuses; part of his justification for refusal is that he took charge of the German radio transmitter some months ago, but this is, in a sense, a grave admission, for I remember that it was alleged as long as three years ago that a radio transmitter was being used. De Valera says that he could not entertain the U.S.A. proposals without complete betrayal of "our democratic trust."—America has acted sensibly, but at all events the incident emphasises British tolerance, for we ourselves put up with this situation when our own position was most perilous.

*March 11th, 1944.*

Authentic conversations:

"Well, I guess when we were getting near Chicago the money wasn't changing hands fast enough at poker, so the President and Vice-Presidents o' this motor company went and sat down on the floor of the Pullman and started shooting crap dice, and it got so's 3,000 and 5,000 dollars were the stake. . . . I guess I kept out o' that, though. . . ."

"He came to me and he says, 'Have you any money?' And I said, 'No. What do you want it for, anyhow?' He said, 'I've got a formula and I want a thousand dollars. Now, you come in on it. . . .' I wouldn't do it, I hadn't a thousand dollars to lose, but I found him a man who had, and he put the thousand dollars down—and to-day they're millionaires. That formula was —, and you know what *that's* worth. . . ."

"Yes, I went to school with General Marshall—four years I was with him—in the same room. We threw some room-mates out and got others in, but he and I stuck together. No, he wasn't brilliant—finished about halfway down the list as a rule, and I was about next to the bottom, but he had lots of

character and that's what counts—character. The fellows at the top of the class too often finish in lunatic asylums or doing jobs that don't matter—brains, if they're only just brains, are always cheap. . . .”

“Yea, I saw something of the election of the last Governor—quite a bit of *opera bouffe* about it. . . .”

“Huey Long—a remarkable memory, that man. You could meet him to-day and if you saw him again in five years, why he'd remember who you were and all about you. He had everybody in Washington taped, so if anybody attacked him he'd just reel off all their past history—terrified 'em. When he was shot, one of his henchmen in Washington took out all his files right off and had 'em destroyed. You know his slogan—‘Every man a king’—don't know what it meant, but it sounded O.K. He gave us all our roads and that huge bridge—guess they must ha' spent quite sixty million dollars o' the 100 million they had. . . . Yea, there's that other fellah—he's in the penitentiary, but he's drawing money from hot oil, I guess—yea, black-market petrol. . . .”

“You must understand there's all these clubs. Now if you're in the top rung you're, maybe, a Rotarian; and the fellas who eanna be Rotarians are the Kiwanis; then there's the Elks and the Young Businessmen's Club, and the Advertising Club, and the Lord knows what. And there's the women's clubs on top of all them. Every week they have a talk or a lecture, and you listen to some guy who tells you something you don't know—that is, if you're lucky. If you're busy making money and you've no time to read or to think things out for yourself, these clubs are just the thing.”

*March 12th, 1944.*

A group of Army and Navy officers I met—veterans of the last war—wore a ribbon in their civilian jacket lapel—as Frenchmen wear the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. The American officers' ribbon was vari-coloured, like the General Service ribbon of 1914–18. I found this ribbon very neat and, in a time of uniforms, no bad thing. Men too old to fight like to keep their end up. But badges on plain clothes are not in our British tradition. Only a British workman here and there wears his last war's ribbons on his waistcoat. I've met men in the Merchant Navy and the R.A.F., too indifferent about even this war's medal ribbons to wear them.

Is any tragedy deeper than that of married folk who long for a child and cannot achieve one? I think not. I met such an American couple yesterday. Even at second remove, the woman almost adores an English child looked after by friends of hers, another couple who are themselves childless. When England was enduring the Blitz, the American woman was wont to say to the English parents: "If anything happens to you, we shall adopt your daughter." A psychiatrist might read something into this.

New Orleans is to have an International House—a club, a restaurant, a meeting place in which foreigners will find secretaries who speak and write their language. Primarily, it is designed to attract traders from the South American republics with which New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley hope to do a vastly increased business. For those republics have grown rich in this war. The overseas pre-war trade of U.S.A. was roughly 10 per cent.; New Orleans men foresee, as do others, that foreign trade will have to be far more than that if America's increased output, grown immeasurably under the impetus of war, is to be absorbed. One question remains, however: Is a South American *bloc* to be formed, a *bloc* formed by the Argentine, Chili, and some others, a *bloc* that might prove inimical to the interests of U.S.A.—for Argentine and U.S.A. both produce wheat and beef?

I was amused to hear a banker growling about American manufacturers' failure to study the needs of foreign customers—too much take it or leave it, he said—precisely what was said of Lancashire cotton manufacturers twenty years ago.

Thirty Americans—among them two women, both of Chicago—are to face charges in Washington of conspiring to establish a Nazi form of government in the United States. Attorney-General Biddle's department likens them to Quisling and Laval.

*March 13th, 1944.*

To-day is warm as an English summer's day. Already some of the flowers have come and gone. Yesterday I attended a Cavalcade of Flowers in the auditorium, where, with dancing and music and singing, the story of the birth and development of New Orleans was briefly told; the arrival of the French, the bringing of the casket girls, the attempt 150 years ago to turn this city into the Versailles of America, the defeat of the British in 1815, the coming of the American Civil War, the resurgence

of opera and dancing. The "City of Care Forgot" was how she was described. "Through six years of civil war she fought and sang." When the Civil War was spoken of the band began to play "Dixie," the marching song of the South. What a grand tune it is! The spirit of the South is in it, that part of the South a trifle contemptuous of the Machine Age, the South which would rather have 5,000 acres of impoverished soil than a thriving shipbuilding yard, the South with its feudalism and *salons*. And, upon my soul, one's heart is inclined to go out to it. The spectacle yesterday was excellently done. The girls were charming and some of them beautiful, the ballet was simple but good, the singing likewise. Only the speeches, alas! fell below standard, and the final arrangements went to pieces—a march by naval and military was announced, but did not occur. Would Admiral Bennett stand up? But the Admiral wasn't there. Well, at all events, there would now be public dancing on the stage—but not a soul went up to dance. The speaker thereupon said it was "just one of those things."

In the evening I called on Mr. Edward Parsons, a lawyer and collector of books. Mr. Parsons is a scholar and a wit; he is also possessed of the finest private library I have seen. For two hours he unfolded treasures to my eyes. I cannot remember a tenth of what I saw. However, when Napoleon invaded Egypt he took with him seventy savants—among them scientists, painters, ornithologists. They produced books on Egyptian lore, and I saw the book they did on the country's birds, with plates hand-painted, and so vivid as to be virtually three-dimensional. This book is a yard square and 135 years old, but the colour appears to be perfect. This Parsons collection holds the original pages of diary written by Surgeon William Warren, who was on the ship *Northumberland* which took Napoleon to St. Helena. Warren records day by day his meetings with the Emperor. One day Napoleon said to him: "Ah! Doctor, if you could only cure the mind as well as the body." There's an original colour drawing of Napoleon, the eyes grey-blue, the mouth firm, but as finely modelled as a woman's. Mr. Parsons next produced some original documents concerning the founding of New Orleans, the first piece of printing ever done in America—a Proclamation—together with the letters Major-General Andrew Jackson wrote on Jean Lafitte, the buccaneer and pirate. Jean Lafitte assisted Jackson when the latter destroyed 1,000 British for the loss to himself of only seven men (though it must be added that, across the river, Jackson's leader Morgan was being severely

handed by the British and that to Morgan, Jackson sent Lafitte and a General Humbert who had fought with Napoleon, saying to Morgan: "Your task is easy," though whether in cajolement or ignorance it's hard to say). This British expedition to the Mississippi Valley was ill-fated and, says Mr. Parsons, the Duke of Wellington was against it from the first, arguing that swamps made it impracticable. Why was it embarked on? Who overruled the Duke? The fact is it was the Admiralty, and they based their view on a report, the manuscript of which I saw, made by Captain William Yeo, who seems to have acted as a spy. He wrote that a frigate, duly lightened, could get over the bar at the river mouth and could sail unobserved right up to the city—which was true enough; and that the city had neither the wherewithal for offence or defence. But the city rapidly acquired that wherewithal in the shape of Andrew Jackson and the militia and the redoubtable Lafitte. (Lafitte had a sense of humour. He said he was not a pirate, though he granted he had difficulty in complying with the Customs regulations!) The actual heavy losses by the British were sustained by attacking head on in mass, towards a canal behind which the Americans had built emplacements of mud and cotton bales. A few guns and some skilled sharpshooters did the slaughter. The episode was referred to in the Cavalcade of Flowers as "One of the most glorious pages in American history."

Of the other treasures in Mr. Parsons' house, there's enough of Shakespeare to keep the world pretty well-informed on his works, were all else to go; there's one of the nine extant signatures of Milton, one of the original editions of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, the exquisitely printed Bordonis Homer (the *Iliad*) with three dedications, each dedication struck in a different fount of type—one in Italian, one in French, one in Latin; and there's a book printed on cork and light as a feather. But there are 40,000 books and 10,000 manuscripts, and a man would be delighted to possess any one of them. As for how Mr. Parsons acquired them, he said in his dry fashion: "I have acquired them as a drunkard gets drink. No lack of money, nothing that man has devised will prevent him getting it—his mind is set on it and he succeeds. So with me and these books." He tells with amazement of going to the Record Office, London, and seeing before him on a table the actual wills of Shakespeare, Thackeray, Tennyson and others and the codicil to Horatio Nelson's will, and of his delight when invited to take up the codicil in his hand and read it aloud.

He made an admirable suggestion—that in these days of impoverished paper for our books in England, six copies of each should be published on good paper for the British Museum. I added: “And one good copy for the author.”

An old American of mixed English and Scots descent who has lived in America all his life makes some points: That mere flattery of America and patting her on the back will not help good relations, but the reverse. That Americans still continued to blame England after the last war for getting them into it—they seldom blamed the Germans! That Americans don't blame the Scots or Welsh—indeed, they think England bosses those countries! That it's still thought England dodges the column when it comes to fighting and gets others to do it (even the Devon men or the Northumbrians are thought of as not English). He suspects that Mr. Churchill has encouraged the notion that it has taken America to save Britain in this war, believing that our fighting together will make us close to one another, and that if America thinks she has saved Britain, she will love her for that reason. This old American believes the reverse is true. America had her head turned by her contribution to success at the end of the last war. If she thinks that she has won this new war, then she'll be the worse, not the better for it, in her attitude to Britain. He wants America to know the facts. So do I. He thinks Britain has camouflaged or concealed her own effort. The prevalent misunderstanding of Britain he calls a grotesque tragedy, and a threat to the peace of the world.

That's well said.

A young American writer said to me: “If the Negroes had equality and their economic status were raised, that would affect the whole life of the South, for those who have black servants would not be able any longer to have them, and their own (white) standard of life and comfort would decline. Who can expect them to like that idea? I've gone into houses where, as soon as you arrive, a black boy brings a bowl of water, takes off your shoes and washes your feet. Fine. But would that happen if the Negroes had equality? There are places in the South where, if your income is 75 dollars a week, you could—pre-war—have two or three Negro servants.”

A group to further American-Soviet good relations has a working committee—split into various smaller groups—of about 120 people, some twenty to thirty of whom are Negroes.

This American-Soviet movement is sponsored by some of the outstanding citizens of New Orleans. The Negroes work among this group, meet and discuss without any division or discrimination. Their meetings, of course, take place in private houses or in halls where whites and blacks can meet without difficulties arising. My informant thinks this the first time in the South that such a development has occurred.

A professor—a former Englishman who has lived in America twenty years and is now an American—said to me: “After all this time, I begin to understand the country. It took me ten or fifteen years to begin to do so. One can take deeper breaths here than in England. I worked for a year in Walt Disney’s studio amid a good fellowship that was amazing.” But he thought the danger of American manufacturers going Fascist is a very real one.

*March 14th, 1944.*

New Orleans has streets and *pátios* that might be in Spain or France. Last evening I went through a great wooden door—into which a small one was let—and found myself on a tiled pathway. Beyond was a figured iron gate and beyond that a tiled courtyard with a garden in the centre and a climbing wooden stairway behind leading to a veranda, and off the veranda a small apartment. This was my friend’s apartment; it used to be the Negro apartment of a large house. I dined under the sky in a *patio* where each small table held a red candle in a lamp shade. Flaring gas jets burned in old-fashioned iron street lamps, and a string orchestra played in a small barn with open doorway, and under the stars people danced. The iron gateway to the *patio* bore a sign saying it is a charm gate 200 years old, and that even to touch the gate will impart charm unto you. Ancient muskets and flintlocks hang on the walls, and the flags of France, Spain and England hang there, too.

An acquaintance said: “Did you hear of the ‘Win or Lose Oil Company’?” An enchanting idea. This company bought land adjacent to the oil wells of big oil companies. The procedure was to inform the big oil companies that the new company was about to sink wells close by. Whereupon the big company usually paid them very handsomely *not* to sink the new wells. In that fashion, with no expenditure save a little on notepaper, no overheads, no well-sinkings, they made millions of dollars. What could be more captivating? Another friend says it has kinship



with what he calls the Quietist Movement in China, which believes in doing nothing, whereupon everything will come to you.

The sheets on my bed are changed every day.

A barber shop has a notice: "Safety razor and towel, 25 c." Americans think of everything—nearly everything.

I see that we are to stop traffic between Britain and Eire and to close the Ulster-Eire border in our efforts to ensure that Germans and Japanese in Eire don't discover news about the Second Front. I'm not sure of the wisdom of these acts. Maybe, of course, we ought to have done it years ago. But doing it now will exacerbate Anglo-Irish relations. It is we and not America who, in my view, will get the backwash. We shall shortly be told we British are starving or throttling Eire. The need for our actions may be vital—the layman is too ignorant to know—but it's difficult to see how the danger is greater now than hitherto, especially in the days when we stood alone against the world.

I foresee that when I have been back in England a month or two I shall be thinking with longing of America, for there's much here to like and admire. What was that phrase—being homesick on both sides of the Atlantic? Much truth in it.

*March 15th, 1944.*

I've been glancing at the *Monroe Times*, an electioneering paper dated January 6th, 1944. It makes an attack on James H. Davis, who was running for Governor of Louisiana, and prints the words of "The Bad Bug Blues," which, it alleges, Davis, whom it describes as a Juke-box Specialist, wrote and sang. The paper prints also a radio address delivered by Senator Joe T. Cawthorn, who was running for Attorney-General, wherein Mr. Cawthorn speaks without flattery of the then Attorney-General Eugene Stanley. Mr. Stanley, said Mr. Cawthorn, "has thrived all his life on threats, persecution and blackmail. . . . Mr. Stanley advised you I was running for the office of Attorney-General to stay out of the Army. To this charge I say that Mr. Stanley is a liar. . . . There are (said Mr. Cawthorn) fifty-seven candidates for State and local offices in the draft age yet the only one mentioned in this campaign by their opponent has been myself." "I appeal to you to-night,"

he concluded, "if you want to elect an Attorney-General that will run the office fairly and efficiently, free of abuse and persecution, as well as economically, go out and go to work for Joe T. Cawthorn."

Quite a Dickensian ring about it.

I am assured by a journalist who reported the campaign that Davis was offered a very large sum of money to withdraw.

A student of America who has lived here a couple of years says: "There's too much Momma rule for the nation to be sound."

American is not always English. In advertisements "night" had fairly often become "nite," "day or night" is "dayinite," "you know" is "U know," "easy" can become "E-Z." In another fifty years what will it be like? Ogden Nash, the humorous versifier, rhymes "turtle" with "fertile," "talcum" with "welcome," "bassinettes" with "fascinates," "Borgia" with "towards you."

American men wear small chains round their neckties to prevent them blowing about.

An American who is French and a member of the "French comedians" in New Orleans tells me he takes part in amateur theatricals in French, but alas! they cannot stage a character who is having an *affaire*—adultery is barred. You have no idea, he says, how strict the Creoles are. All the same, New Orleans, he says, is the true America. Twenty-five miles out are people who speak nothing but French. Have I seen the street-lamps in the French quarter? But they are the street-lamps of Paris!

At a R.A.F. exhibition here I met General Fremont Hodson of the U.S. Army, whose great-great-grandfather came from Winchester. This was the first time he had met another Hodson. He is under fifty; has two sons, both 6 feet 3 inches high, one just going to West Point. With this young man I looked at the R.A.F. pictures of bomb damage. "Why couldn't the same energy be used to *make* things?" the young man said. Why not, indeed?

*Time* has two sidelights: (1) a March of Time film is being made on American intolerance. (2) A group of Fundamentalists who are a branch of the Mormons have been prosecuted for

practising polygamy. (One husband with six wives said: "Anybody who thinks this is fun ought to try it.") The vigour with which certain American journalists expose scandal or shadiness is first-rate. No doubt about the need for free writing.

*Desert Victory* has won the Academy award for the best documentary film of the year. This decision is a tribute to American fairness, for Frank Capra's *Battle of Russia* must have run it very close.

March 17th, 1944.

My train is running through Georgia. In some queer way a part of me—maybe a part of all Englishmen—seems to belong to the Southern States of America. Is it because I footslogged along English roads in 1914 singing *Dixie*? But I think it goes deeper; the Southern whites have a good deal of Anglo-Saxon stock, and, of course, our Lancashire cotton for generations has largely come from this part of the world. From New Orleans the train had jogged across marshes rich in wildfowl. Near Pensacola we ran across estuaries on a bridge so low and so narrow that it was as if the train had become a boat; on both sides nothing but water, and water that almost lapped the wheels. A while back my travelling acquaintance leaned over to whisper that three Negro officers were riding in the coach, unsegregated! Sensation! Later, one entered the smoking-car when I was there—a fine-looking man and a doctor of medicine, unless I'm mistaken. Two American white officers were there; nobody spoke.

We are now running north and the trees are barer, but there's beauty in the landscape—small trees rosy-pink with blossom and others beginning to burst into whiteness as though a thin snowstorm has fallen. I had breakfasted at Atlanta in a coffee-shop on the platform. The young American officer opposite was fed up to the teeth; he couldn't say how far it was to Knoxville (whither I'm bound), but he could tell me how far it was to Los Angeles, for he'd just come from there, and gee! how glad he'd be to go back! This place was a dump, and where he was *going* was a dump, and, anyhow, he'd caught a bad cold. I felt impatient—yet what right have I to be impatient? I do very much as I like. That young man does not. He probably hates the Army, sees danger and discomfort ahead, and feels caught; those of us who are free don't know we're born. "A Christ-like, all-embracing compassion" is the novelist's first need, said Arnold Bennett. Amen to that. I've been reading

with immense pleasure John P. Marquand's *So Little Time*, a cool, satiric, humorous picture of American life up to Pearl Harbour, but with sadness and heartbreak in it, too. He quotes once or twice that passage in Ecclesiastes: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the heaven. . . . A time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance. . . . A time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace."

There are moments when I feel a long way from home. London has been getting badly bombed again, and while I don't find bombs more comfortable than anybody else—indeed, they worry me more as time goes on—it will be good to be back. Most British folk I meet wish they, too, were returning. As the salmon is drawn back to the river of its birth, so we are drawn. Hard to explain why. There's something deeper in it than those we care for, maybe something in the soil and the water and the landscape.

Here in Georgia many shacks look little better than that made famous in *Tobacco Road*. The earth is a brick-dust, yellow-red.

We are nearing Knoxville and the world begins to look a bit like England—wooded, rolling hills, the ground yellow with dried grasses, trees turning green. Fine country, with small wooden houses among the trees. Crops spring up a deep vivid green, and yonder is a small stone house, stones as uneven as a crazy pavement, as though, indeed, you'd rooted up such a pavement and covered a house with it; cute.

Departing guests keep their hotel rooms till 6 p.m., and I didn't get mine till 9 p.m. In Knoxville I walked out through the town, over the river bridge and beyond. The river brought to mind the Rhondda Valley—a stream whose banks are littered with debris; near the water stood a wooden house, tumble-down, poverty-stricken, a Negro house. I walked through a mile of Negro quarter, wooden houses mosquito-netted, wooden shops, drug-stores. The road wound up and down, and I walked straight on. A beautiful day, warm; slowly, houses became bigger, grander, the houses of white folk; gardens began to have trees, trees laden with white blossom, magnolias, and smaller ones looking like almond trees bursting with blossoms also. A postman came along smoking a cigar,

and we stopped to talk. After a moment or two he held out his hand, giving me his name, and we shook hands. He's half Irish, half English (by descent), said they knew nothing of the war here, never see a plane—but, of course, some of the boys have gone. The Tennessee Valley Authority scheme, he said, has brought 40,000 new people to this town. A lot of Greeks are here now—Greeks are fine people, he thinks. My eyes were watching the countryside. A couple of mules in the field across the road turned the plough they were drawing and strode off again. Nearby was a field of dried stalks high as a man. "That's corn," he said, "left from last year. Guess they took the ears off and left it like that." He crossed the road to catch the bus we saw coming, and I went on. Presently I left the main road and turned up a byway and half a mile up the hill came on a curious sight; among the scrub near the path I saw what seemed to be a tiny gravestone toppled over. I thought an old favourite dog might be buried there, and strode into the scrub to look at the name. On the stone was carved: "Flora Smith, 1916-1938." A young woman, then. And now I saw that other gravestones were among the rough grass, and a short way higher up the rising path were two or three graves as close as 15 yards to a wooden house—and not far from a dozen other houses dotted nearby. *One grave was new, with flowers and rain-sodden ribbons lying on the soil.* A bony horse stood close by the wooden house, a horse harnessed to a shining plough like a knife, and while I looked at the graves a man took the horse and, with many an imprecation, urged it down the road, taking the reins behind it. I never before saw a home-made burial ground such as this, yet this would suit me infinitely better than Forest Lawns at Hollywood. However, I'd prefer neither—I'd rather be burnt and afterwards blown on the wind from a mountain top.

I recall a bar in Los Angeles lit with red lights so dimly that you couldn't see whether a man was tight or not.

In an article I wrote on Kaiser's shipyards I gave their own figure of 1,800 Liberty ships sailing the seas. The U.S. Washington censor, after five days' consideration, and in my absence, altered that figure to 750. This week *Time* prints the figure of 1,917 Liberty ships delivered up to February 1st, in sixty-two of which, it says, serious structural failures have developed. Kaiser's own magazine admitted that fourteen of their ships had broken up on the seas.

*March 18th, 1944.*

I spent most of to-day talking to men of the Tennessee Valley Authority—James P. Pope, one of the three Directors who each draw 10,000 dollars a year, Neil Bass, the Chief Conservation Engineer, and George F. Gant, Director of Personnel. Mr. Pope was formerly a Senator and Mayor in another state. Mr. Bass is younger, forty-odd, as good-looking in his way as Roosevelt. Mr. Gant is the type that makes university lecturers.

This Tennessee Valley scheme is Government in action, and the action has gone towards bringing back life to the soil that had grown impoverished, winning electric power from waterways by using dams, making those waterways navigable to a degree never known before, and controlling floods (incidentally, partially controlling the Mississippi, too). Along with this has gone a fight against malaria, for this is a malarial valley; and much research work on crops, in conjunction with the University of Tennessee. The work was begun in 1933.

To this valley came, 150 or 200 years ago, English, Scots, Irish and other settlers, bold, adventurous men who pioneered. But they took everything from the soil and forests and gave nothing back. Cotton or corn were grown—little else. For long months in the winter the crop land was bare, and the region's 50 inches of rain a year washed the top-soil into the river, and the river carried it off as useless silt. The phosphorus, more precious than gold, was washed away, too. Slowly the valley became poorer. (This situation was true of many, or most, of the Southern States in the East, with the exception of Florida.) On top of this came the slump. Banks were shut; scrip was sometimes given against taxes as yet uncollected, and unemployment was as plentiful as water coming down from the heavens. In these circumstances the Roosevelt Government launched T.V.A.

There was opposition. Opposition from the power companies, who make and sell electricity. Opposition from the railways, who foresaw development of waterborne goods. Opposition from coal companies, who thought their coal wouldn't be so widely bought. These last were mistaken. T.V.A. itself, which bought 1,651 tons of coal in 1935, bought 2,121,628 tons in 1942.

The power companies filed injunctions—thirty-nine of them; thirty-eight were disposed of. Nobody, I think, would pretend that love has displaced hate, but to-day exchange agreements exist on surplus power between T.V.A. and power companies. Railroads are still opposed to developing the river for traffic

and are slow to make joint rates, but none the less some collaboration is achieved. At this moment, a bill is before Senate with clauses that would clip T.V.A.'s wings; some folk would like to see it under political domination—more under Congress's thumb. T.V.A.'s Directors claim that no political influence has weight when jobs are filled—and this, if true, is good, for it is rare in Government jobs in this country.

Mr. Pope claims that T.V.A.'s great virtue is that it is democratic—that it works through existing bodies and institutions. T.V.A. takes its electric power to various cities and towns, and those towns buy it and distribute it. When a dam is built, a young army of workers and their families move in and live close by. T.V.A. works with the local education and housing and library authorities in creating amenities, and prides itself that, when the young army finally withdraws, the community left behind is richer in civilised life than it was before. The valley to-day has 20,000 demonstration farms—farms where experiments in new methods are made, and made in a practical way by the farmers themselves. Thus: a small community discusses whether it will have a hand in what's being done, decides it will, and chooses which farm shall be experimental. That particular farmer enters into agreement with T.V.A. In collaboration, they agree on fertilisers, on the right crops to keep the soil covered, on the right breeds of cattle; in this way, phosphates and minerals are preserved in the earth. I'm assured that, on the average, food output on those farms has risen 30 per cent. without extra labour or extra equipment.

I am aware that all this sounds extremely rosy; I am also aware that, short of a much longer stay and investigation than I can make, I am unable to say how strictly accurate statements made to me are. But my informants are Civil Servants, and I've no reason to think they are less accurate than our own Civil Servants. It can hardly be that T.V.A. has done less than a good job. Fourteen dams have been built, two are under construction, three others are authorised. At the peak, T.V.A. employed 42,000 workpeople. To-day the figure is 25,000, and when all constructions, dams, locks, etc., are finished and T.V.A. is nothing but an operating authority, the number will fall to 10,000. This position will be reached within the next year or two. The Fontana Dam, 400 feet high and the highest dam east of the Rockies, will be finished, it's thought, some time this year. The Kentucky Dam, the biggest dam on the Tennessee system and the first flood-control dam, will be com-

pleted this year also. On two other dams—South Holston and Watauga—twelve million dollars' worth of work has been done, but they'll not be finished till after the war.

I asked Mr. Pope whether, since this T.V.A. has succeeded, there are not other areas in the United States that would benefit from such a plan. He said there is a Bill now halfway through Congress to control the Cumberland River, which lies to the north. (The Army, I believe, are building some dams there at the moment.) Originally, he said, the Federal Government had in mind seven such projects as T.V.A.

On the need for restoring phosphates to United States soil, Mr. Bass said that all the humid regions are deficient in phosphates, including Texas and the wheat belt and the dairy area. It is from the blue-grass region of central Kentucky and Tennessee, said Mr. Bass, a low basin naturally rich in phosphates, that the racehorses come. He spoke of Porto Rico in the Caribbean having a high ridge, on one side of which folk are stalwart, and on the other bow-legged. The difference is thought to spring from a plenitude of phosphorus on one side and a deficiency on the other. Britain gives the highest priority of all to imported phosphates; a ship-load of triple-super phosphates is worth seven ship-loads of cereals.

T.V.A. in its chemical factories makes half of all the phosphates used by U.S.A., Britain and Russia.

I was given this formula—that 2,600 kilowatt-hours produces 1 ton of  $P_2O_5$  (a phosphate); that 2 tons of triple-super-phosphate plus 20 tons of lime is equal to one year's work for one man in typical farm production.

It follows as night the day that the employment of large numbers of T.V.A. men at decent rates of pay raises the standard of the valley. The lowest-paid unskilled labour draws 57 cents an hour, or some 30 dollars a week. The lowest-paid skilled men (carpenters) get 70 dollars a week; plumbers and men working on structural steel get 90 dollars if paid by the hour. Apart from the Directors, none among the administrative and managerial staffs draws so much as 10,000 dollars. Some men have left for private industry at salaries of 15,000, 20,000 or even 25,000 dollars, and at least one who left for 20,000 dollars came back within a year because he preferred to labour at this worth-while job. Money is not everything, it seems, even in America. Each year T.V.A. takes on 200 to 300 college graduates who are qualified to do semi-technical jobs, and there's an apprentice scheme for carpenters, machinists, and electricians under which lads of eighteen begin at 65 cents an hour



and, during a three or four years' apprenticeship, rise at intervals to 80, 85 cents and finally 1 dollar an hour while still apprentices. T.V.A. was the first Federal agency to enter into formal contracts with labour. The authority is not a closed shop, but it prefers men to be in unions. Probably 90 per cent. are in unions, and there's collective bargaining with white-collar workers, too.

I asked about Negro labour. Some 11 per cent. of the T.V.A. workers are Negroes, and they're paid for the job as white workers are. A few Negroes in the chemical plant draw as much as 70 or 90 dollars. A Negro doctor (Ph.D.) is on headquarters staff to handle Negro personnel, and earns about 3,500 dollars a year so doing.

When Negroes are promoted, friction sometimes arises. The promotion, for instance, of Negro messengers into filing clerks has caused criticism, and a senior official said to me: "If I were to bring a coloured girl into this office, it would probably cause trouble." Inasmuch, however, as the Negro problem is partly one of their being a depressed class, it's thought, for instance, that their employment at Scotsboro in Alabama in a cheese factory (Scotsboro, which has been famous in its day for racial strife) has resulted in better relations.

Mr. Pope gave me some figures on cost of the T.V.A. plan. Up to this year, the Federal Government has spent 668 million dollars on dams, locks, etc. T.V.A. had a revenue in 1943 of 31,674,000 dollars gross, and after paying all expenses and depreciation, a net income of 13,800,000 dollars. The return on money expended on power installations is 4.86 per cent., and if you charge locks and river development against income also (T.V.A. argues that this charge is not strictly legitimate, since this sort of work is done all over U.S.A. without income return), the percentage return is 2.4. Putting cost of flood control, navigation and power all together, the Federal's expenditure will be paid back in sixty years. And the benefits? Less flood, a river made navigable for 650 miles (a channel 9 feet deep and 300 feet wide), an increase in waterborne traffic from 940,000 tons in 1933 to 3,000,000 tons in 1943 with larger ships using the river, and, besides all this, much industrial development. In the four states of the valley the increase in manufacturing plants rose 52 per cent. between 1933 and 1939, while in the country as a whole it rose only 32 per cent. New factories or branches of existing firms came to the valley, among them Du Pont, various textiles and implements, and shoe manufacture; dairy and cheese factories; and one

that sounds strange, the growing and cracking of black walnuts.

*March 19th, 1944.*

The Tennessee Valley is keeping up its reputation for rain. It's been raining for twenty-four hours, tipping down. No wonder English pioneers felt at home. It is warm and muggy, and there's dirt in the air. My bedroom's windows are as dirty as if I were in Manchester. Knoxville has a people who have English characteristics in other ways. No Sunday cinemas are allowed to open. There was a vote on that last November. Nor can you get a whisky and soda here; you can get whisky only from a bootlegger illegally, and the price is 7 or 8 dollars a bottle. The last time whisky was voted on, it lost by 2½ to 1.

Through the rain I drove out to look at Norris Dam, 25 miles away. Clouds hung low over the trees, wispy scarves of cloud blowing about only 200 feet up. The countryside is very fine—woods and hills as beautiful as Scotland or Wales, full of browns and greens. My companion, a young T.V.A. official of thirty or so, talked to me. This is a low-income area, he said; he reckons that pre-war the average income in the valley was no more than 400 dollars a year; in South Carolina it was worse—perhaps as low as 160 dollars a year. "T.V.A. certainly gave a shot in the arm to Knoxville," he said, "certainly gave it a new life." The town has long had spinning and weaving mills.

As you approach the dam you see the concrete bastion spanning the valley, as formidable as though it had to do with war. In the neighbourhood a village has sprung up—picturesque little villas in the woodland, not all occupied by T.V.A. men. But T.V.A. built a cinema and a drug-store, and still runs the latter. We got out in the rain and looked at the dammed-up river, a vast broad stretch of green water, 200 feet deep for several miles. Regattas were held on it in the days of peace, and 20,000 people picnicked on the hillsides. This work of man, this instrument to make war on flood and soil erosion and to bring electricity to farmers and others, is mighty, indeed—as though you had planted down a concrete battleship across Lake Windermere. Over 3,000 men laboured here for three years to build the dam. Thirty-one million dollars was the cost, but that is small as dams go. Kentucky Dam will cost 105 million dollars. Armed guards watch the dam day and night; there's a motorway across the dam, but you may not halt on it. We entered the power-house. Every gate or door we passed was unlocked and re-locked, as though we were in a prison. Con-

crete, aluminium, brown tiles, steel. The mass and weight and finish were superb. I was reminded of the Flying Fortress that flew me out of Burma—the most finished aircraft in its interior that I had ever seen. What a setting for a sabotage film! What shots upwards or downwards of turbine machinery, of concrete waterways, slipways, of tunnels through the dam!

On coming away we chatted with the armed guard, a young man who sits in his cabin for eight hours, alone, and is not allowed to read. How did he get the time over? He grinned, pretended he was going lunatic; said he began to know what solitary confinement is like. He was an air cadet, but got hurt and had twenty-eight stitches put into his stomach. He said: "I was in the Air Corps a year and nineteen days, and never got K.P."

"What's K.P.?"

"Oh, kitchen parade, China clipper, pearl-diving." He guessed politics work in the Army as they do anywhere else (he meant influence, wangling). We talked of flying; you've got to be young, he said, eighteen to twenty-one's the best age for combat pilots. "They've figured out you've got one-twenty-fifth of a second to recognise an enemy aircraft and shoot. If you're late, it's too bad."

I mentioned the English, and he asked did I think Lea is an English name? He has a Bible, old, and in the fly-leaf it's set down how three brothers came to America from England a long while ago, and one called himself Lea, and another Lee and the third Leigh. He thinks he's descended from one of them. All he knows about the English is what he's read; he read a book on the last war by an American who said the Americans revolted against English officers—he guessed it was at some training camp or school. That American writer didn't like the English much, but, as for him, he'd like to go over and see for himself.

A young American has been asking me whether our young people go to parties much, are we film fans, could a man with 3,600 dollars a year run a car and have a wife and two children? I said he probably could, but he'd be pretty hard up. I asked him about marriage: At what age do the girls marry in Knoxville? He thought the age was about eighteen. His own sister married at sixteen, and by twenty-five she has been married three times, twice to the same man.

An American official I talked with yesterday spoke so like a Negro that if my eyes had been closed I'd have sworn he was

not white, but black. I was 2 yards away, but I couldn't understand half that he said, and finally gave up trying; it was too exhausting.

A cultured American said to me that while he and his friends who are university dons and doctors of medicine and lawyers think the Allies are doing well militarily, his group are pessimistic as to the outlook post-war, either internationally or in America.

Several American newspapers are worried at the moment over Stalin's trick of moving without consulting us or U.S.A., and about America's lack of a foreign policy that is understandable. Cordell Hull is seventy-three. Can a man so old steer a continent, I wonder?

A fine and spirited letter comes to me to-day from K., an English friend in America. It tells me that Lord Halifax's son, Captain Wood, who lost his legs in North Africa and travelled over America with his servant called "Eighth Army" (for this noble badge was written on his sleeve) is back in England, and has learnt to walk, drive a car and ride a pony. What a superb manifestation of the human spirit! Most of us would have been overcome with despair and fury at our luckless fate. My friend has been to a Unitarian church. "The church is on a village green—a church fat, large, spacious, glowing with a sort of heavenly pure delight. But the old-fashioned pews are such that you cannot kneel. I loathe priests and dogmas and sacraments and crooked thinking fostered by all organised religion, but how I missed the Church of England English, the roll and thunder of the prayers and psalms, and if you do believe in Him enough to pay a parson, why not kneel down? . . ." The letter goes on to describe a typical American manifestation and, I think, a good one—warm-hearted, generous and kindly. Halifax was speaking in Massachusetts to business men, and the local Mayor, an Irishman, leapt up and told the audience of Halifax's personal losses in this war, so that it went straight to the heart of every proud and anxious father there. One Englishman there, not Halifax, thought it in very bad taste, but my friend is certain it made the day, for every word of Halifax's that followed went home—namely, that under Lend-Lease we should all give what we have.

The Tennessee Valley is plagued by mosquitoes so that houses and shops with double doors, one of them netted fine enough

to resist the insects, and windows similarly proofed, are common. For 2,000 years men have been observing mosquitoes and for a long time fighting them; but we still know too little about them. T.V.A. has fought them and partly defeated them. T.V.A.'s methods have been copied by others, and men trained in this valley are serving with the U.S. Army overseas fighting this universal foe. Here, another battle had to be fought—between those who held wild life pretty sacred and wished to keep the marshes where wild life flourished, and those who put human health first. The fight against the mosquito has been waged by destroying vegetation where larvæ breed, by causing water to rise and fall so that floating larvæ are stranded and perish, by use of sprays of oil that kill, and of poison that larvæ eat. Sometimes this spraying has been done from aircraft.

Most cases of malaria in the valley occur within a mile of water, because rarely does the flight of the female mosquito in search of a blood meal to enable her to develop her eggs exceed one mile. Blood meal! Um. You and I provide it if we're there. Curious to note that for centuries men thought malaria was caused by odours and foul gases rising from swamps. Certain ponds produce mosquitoes and other ponds which look just the same do not. Nobody knows why.

March 21st, 1944.

Henry Ford has arrived in Knoxville. His hotel is sworn to secrecy. The Mayor, E. E. Patton, has wired him (as presumably the only way of reaching him), promising not to intrude, but "we recognise you as the greatest industrialist of all time, and our entire city is honoured by your presence." Talk about Royalty!

The *Knoxville Journal* to-day calls on the Attorney-General, William Burton, to get busy prosecuting a constable named Mose Hawkins who "was found serving drinks and seemed to be in charge of the place" when the Chief Constable arrived at a certain address. The *Journal* says: "Frankly, the public is not at all astonished to find Hawkins tolerant in his attitude towards law violation. It may even be that a great majority of the voters who made him constable want exactly that kind of law enforcement officer in their midst." But it adds, "the public is concerned about the Attorney-General's attitude towards flagrant contempt of his duty by a sworn officer of the law."

It isn't new for a journal to stir up the law officers. Last Sunday, P.M., the New York Radical paper owned by Marshall

Field, asked the Federal Attorney-General, Francis Biddle: "Why don't you prosecute Coughlin?"—this is Charles E. Coughlin, who runs *The Christian Front*. *P.M.* alleges that much of the pro-Nazi activity in Eire had its origin in the U.S.A. Coughlin, *P.M.* asserts, is again publicly propagandising all who will listen in or out of the military services on his basic line that "It matters not what military force wins this war."

*P.M.* has been examining the *Readers' Digest*, and concludes that through recent years that magazine has left the mass of its readers with the feeling "that the American Government is a bungling, boondoggling bureaucracy, that organised labour is run by racketeers, that America's Allies cannot be counted on in the long run, that a Radical conspiracy is undermining the American way of life, and that only private enterprise can save it." The *New Republic*, the liberal weekly, announced this month that it would accept no more farmed-out articles from the *Digest*, and added: "If the *Digest* wants to expose its nine million readers to some of the good liberal doctrine from the pages of the *New Republic* we shall be happy to have it do so—happy and surprised, in view of the way its policy has been recently shaped."

*Digest* is, however, entitled to be what it likes.

I much enjoyed meeting yesterday Dr. C. A. Mooers, Dean of the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Tennessee. I told him he has some facial resemblance to Professor Gilbert Murray. Dr. Mooers has that squarish, hatchet-faced, lean jaw, and keen appraising eye behind metal-rimmed spectacles, which deep thought can engender; but he's got a lot of humour, too, and kept chuckling as we talked. He's of English, Scots and Irish origin. We chuckled together over the Anglo-Saxon's aversion from working too hard; he had been telling me that whereas on a lot of Tennessee farms the corn bushels per acre are only 22 bushels, some farmers get 40 to 60—but they are Swiss-Germans. There's been a good deal of under-feeding in the valley, the wrong sort of feeding. The University persuaded folk to eat soya beans, but they had to pay women 10 dollars a month to get them to do it, and when the payment stopped, the eating of the beans stopped! I said: "There's something pigheaded and stupid in us Anglo-Saxons, but the same qualities have kept us going in this war and have saved the world."

Everybody assures me that this is the most Anglo-Saxon part of America, and if that's so it's no compliment to us that here

the standard of life has been so low. Nor that the Negro question is so far from solution. Dr. Moocrs said that in Georgia the whites are outnumbered in some areas by the blacks, and Anglo-Saxons have no intention of being ruled by blacks—which is a reason why blacks don't vote, or that their possession of the vote amounts to little more than theory. This is another sidelight on a thorny problem. Negro ignorance can be deep, too. He told me of the time of depression, when you could go along and draw some food from Uncle Sam to keep you going. An old Aunt Emma he knew, a Negress, after making such a journey, said on her return: "I jus' don't think much o' this Uncle Sam everybody talks 'bout." "Why, Emma. What's the matter with Uncle Sam?" "Why," said Emma, "he got too many lady friends." To Emma, Uncle Sam was a real man who had all these women lined up, calling on him and receiving gifts.

The kindness of many Americans is touching. I cannot imagine anybody in England looking after me as some of these folk do. I am passed on from one to another, and nothing is too much trouble. Dr. Moocrs introduced me to Mr. McLeod, who knows about the experimental farms. Within fifteen minutes, Mr. McLeod and three of his assistants had driven me off to lunch, and to-day one of his men ran me out to Dandridge, thirty miles off in Jefferson County, to meet two or three farmers. But I'm getting too far ahead. This morning I met Mr. David E. Lilienthal, Chairman of the Directors of T.V.A. Mr. Lilienthal is forty-three, a thick-set man with a big fresh face, grey eyes and dimples. When I told him what a setting a dam would make for a sabotage film, he said M.G.M. had played with the idea of making a film of T.V.A., a fictional film, but they couldn't discover where the dramatic conflict would lie. (Or did they mean they didn't know where boy would meet girl?) Certainly a fine subject lies in it. Lilienthal said: "It's really *Grapes of Wrath* with a happy ending." Not a bad description. I asked him who was the original genius who thought of T.V.A. He said it had been talked of for sixteen years before the New Deal—but finally it was Senator Norris and Roosevelt who jointly were responsible. He agreed that T.V.A. partly controlled the Mississippi—that that river has four or five great tributaries, and that each could do with a T.V.A. "Well," I said, "when is it going to be done?" He smiled and said, "Well, Roosevelt is a very determined man." It was Roosevelt who brought in Lilienthal to run this job. He was a young lawyer who had worked for labour unions, and

next for a utility company in the north. He says he was an amateur at this job, that they were all amateurs, that if he'd known the worries and struggles it would involve he doubts if he'd have taken it on, and that he "keeps a bag ready packed." But he said this last with a smile. I said: "You've something to be proud of. Few men at your age have a thing as solid as this behind them." He said there have been times when he's been near to despair, but always he has clung to the vision and common sense of the ordinary valley folk, and they've always turned up trumps. I said: "There seems to be some wisdom in the bones of common folk—look at the way they knocked the Hoare-Laval Treaty on the head in England. Look at the way Americans go against newspaper advice and return Roosevelt." I asked him about Roosevelt. Lilienthal pronounces him generous and kind. I said: "Some folk say that, as an administrator, he ain't worth a nickel." Lilienthal said that was probably because Roosevelt is unorthodox—sometimes sets two lots of officials to do the same job, in order "to blow a hole in it and get it moving." Sometimes he puts turpentine under the tail of a department to make it stir faster. I asked whether, if a Republican succeeded Roosevelt, that would affect T.V.A.? He thought it would. The valley folk, he said, are, in the main, very much behind T.V.A. Labour mayn't like the Chambers of Commerce or the latter like Labour, but both like T.V.A. Finally, talking of T.V.A. and the dangers of its getting involved in politics, he said: "Whatever happens, they can't shift the dams." I liked this man a good deal.

Americans can be sensitive and patriotic even about their weather. They tell a tale pulling their own legs. The first Yank conceded it got cold in his town, but it was a dry cold; didn't hurt you none. The second said, well, it got hot in *his* town, but it was a dry heat—didn't hurt you none. The third said, Well, he guessed it rained sometimes where he came from, about 50 inches a year, but it was a dry rain; didn't hurt you none.

This true anecdote: The Governor of a State not long ago was a notorious lover of women—had one mistress after another. But he was a good Governor, and he was witty and a good sort. The local women's club of the town were exercised in their minds as to the propriety of their voting for him, and ultimately decided to appoint a deputation to wait on him and say that



they'd like to vote for him, but he must mend his ways. At the last moment, however, their hearts failed them; and their leader asked her husband, a close friend of the Governor's, to go and say it for them. And he went. The Governor heard him; and then said with a twinkling eye: "You go and tell 'em, Jim, that I'm getting round to them as fast as I can—I'm working my way along to 'em just about as sharp as I c'n go."

Arkansas State is pronounced "Arkansaw," but Arkansas River is pronounced "Arkansas." This is blood brother to Cholmondeley being Chumley.

When I asked my hotel if they could be sure to call me at four o'clock in the morning to catch a train, they said: "Sure, why we sometimes call parents at all hours to give feeding bottles to the children." This child idolatry! In my bus, a girl of fifteen sat pillowing the head of a soldier of twenty who looked as though he'd had too much Bourbon.

This afternoon we drove out to Dandridge. It was a fine, lively day, and we bowled along. The speed limit everywhere is thirty-five miles an hour—this to save tyres—but darned few take any notice of it. America is not law-abiding. In some areas of the country, half the gas rationing coupons used are fakes (as the Government has just pointed out). Gas (petrol) costs only 23 cents a gallon. On every side as we drove on were the glorious pink-and-white blossoms of peach and pear; small bushes are gold with something akin to laburnum. Pigs run about the fields, or sleep in the sun, among them the red pigs which are really a dark or light brown, and some of them as good a colour as a King Charles spaniel. Farming in Tennessee varies a lot. There are counties—Fayette for one—where Negroes are 75 per cent. of the people, and where cotton is almost the sole crop. Those men make about 300 dollars a year on the average by taking half the value of the five or six bales they grow plus a daily wage for part of their time. These men are croppers, and there are white croppers as well as black. Cropping has had its abuses—doubtless still has; at one time the men paid as much as 28 per cent. interest on money advanced for food and implements. My informants think those rates of interest no longer rule—doubt if the rates are much more than 10 per cent. to-day. It's fair to say that risks are run by lenders, for if the money isn't paid back that same year, the

odds are it never will be paid. Cropping began after the Civil War—the South was poor, with resources used up, the land ravaged by war, slaves freed. Some minds in the South have never quite got over it, nor the land either. In those circumstances, cropping, the sharing of the land's product, either good or bad, was natural and had a good deal to be said for it; after all, it's co-partnership of a sort. There's a small amount of absentee ownership in Tennessee—a few plantations are owned by Englishmen in England, or by others in New York. A Boston man has 20,000 or 30,000 acres—a hunting place with prize cattle, birds, etc. But times have changed. To-day you can occasionally find Negroes living in the fine old plantation houses that have fallen into partial ruin and from which the whites have long since gone. (An English visiting farmer recently astonished agriculturalists when he said that he and his fathers before him had been tenant farmers, farming the same farm. That would seldom happen here; they would buy it long before that time elapsed.)

On the demonstration farms, farmed under the eye of university scientists, outputs have risen 30 per cent. If all the farmers in Tennessee had improved in like manner, the State's output would feed half a million more people. Dr. Mooers thinks that figure of 30 per cent. a modest estimate. How has that rise been brought about? In part, by new small machines: a portable thrasher that a small tractor can pull; a device for curing hay in the barn; a home scarifier that scrapes the seed and causes it to germinate faster; a portable irrigator that can throw water in a square, covering every inch of it (a great advance, this). "One inch of water at the right time will save a crop," said Dr. Mooers, "and you can do it at 1½ dollars an acre." He believes that the Germans used the same sort of slight water-pipes in Africa. An old Ford car can carry the pipes, etc., along and furnish the power for squirting. But, as I have suggested, probably the use of phosphates and the planting of clovers and alfalfa to get nitrogen from the air and keep the soil covered are even more important. The average farm is some 130 acres, but croppers' farms vary from 8 to 100 acres. On them they raise cotton, corn, hay, some poultry, cows and pigs. There are croppers making to-day 1,500 dollars a year.

I asked Mr. McLeod whether Lancashire's decline as a cotton-manufacturing county had hit this part of the world. He said cotton as a crop had certainly declined partly for that reason, but partly also because so many other countries found they could grow it (just as Lancashire has found other nations can

spin it). But he doubted if cotton was any great loss; other crops would probably be better; some change-over is being made.

So we drove on along the sunny road, past coppices where the dogwood (from which spindles are made) was not yet flowering, past the first plantings of tobacco seeds which lay under long rectangles of what resembled gauze, as though a piece of the earth were bandaged from a wound, past a cemetery where lay rows of dead borne from other graves which now are 100 feet beneath the wavelets of dams; and so to Dandridge, a bonnie village. The courthouse steps held groups of men fit for any Western film—old black hats, lean, cavernous, unshaven jaws, plaid shirts usually dirty and sometimes ragged, old men who won't work much more, younger ones who don't like work, anyhow—a cross section, as the Mayor said to me, of the less creditable side of Jefferson County. The Police Marshal was there among them, ruddy, pleasant enough, wearing a blue double-breasted coat lavishly adorned with brass buttons—the sort of man who makes a weather-beaten postman or station-master. He is elected by the populace, voted for, draws a salary, but adds to that by extra fees when he locks a man up or serves a warrant; draws fees, too, for boarding and lodging a man when he keeps him under lock and key—75 cents a day, they said. The court was sitting, and we went in—a big bare room rather like a schoolroom, and well-filled it was with folk of the lower ten enjoying a free entertainment. A man was charged with driving a car when drunk, but, of course, by his account he'd never seen a bottle that day. We saw him on the witness stand, sitting in a chair fiddling with his cap. The lawyers sat down, too. Comfort is the word. A rape case was heard this morning; bootlegging, too. The judge, youngish-looking, also elected by ballot, turned to and fro in his chair, twiddled his mallet. Here was a fragment of America that's a long way from Washington or New York. A lot of these white men labour in the fields; pre-war they got 1 dollar a day; to-day they get, maybe, 2 dollars or  $2\frac{1}{2}$ . But contrast it with the average wage in Detroit, which is 61 dollars a week, and the fact that the other day we paid at New Orleans a Negro golf caddy who carried both our golf bags 3 dollars for the round—and he was only a boy! Depressed whites? Surely. We walked across the road to glance at a lake on French Broad River, a lake caused by building the dam. A farm had been engulfed, and a farm silo stood up in the water like a tiny lighthouse. We drove off past

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terraced hillsides, terraced to prevent erosion, past mountainous, rough country where soil is poor and farms small.

I had with me two young men of the agricultural department of Tennessee University. They know this countryside inside out. In 1930 the farm we were driving past was in the doldrums. The man who tilled it then—you can still see the gullies the fierce rains made in eating the soil away—went to a nearby town, bought a car on hire purchase and came back to his homestead. That night he hung up his tattered overalls for the last time, and beneath them pinned a note. "If any guy thinks these'll fit him, let him get in 'em." Then he started up his car and at midnight drove forth. This neighbourhood hasn't seen him since. But the same farm is thriving to-day. I met Bert C. Nicholson, who has it; he was driving a horse and a mule, tandem. Mr. Nicholson, in his early thirties, is wondering whether he's going to be drafted for the Army. He stood on a farm contraption that looked all shafts and wooden skeleton, his feet on a cross-piece and his backside on an upright sapling. I asked him what they think of the war in those parts, but Bert said: "We don't know enough about the war to have much idea; they tell us things three months after they happen, and maybe it was different at the time." He'd about a thousand dollars left, he said, after paying his farm expenses last year—he grows 2 acres of tobacco. "If you can last till your tobacco is ready, then you've got a bit o' money for Christmas," he said. Yes, tobacco pays well just now: 45 cents a pound, and an acre averages 1,000 lb. weight—and some acres produce 2,000 lb. But it's hard work—takes a lot of hand labour; about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres of tobacco is as much as the farmer hereabouts can tackle, labour being as short as it is. Some folk are made sick in the stomach by working both among the tobacco in the fields and when it hangs drying in the barn. Farms elsewhere grow 8, 10, 20, even 30 or 40 acres of tobacco; the price to-day is princely compared with other days. I talked with a man named Moser, whose family is of German origin, who said he'd sold it in past days for 5 cents a pound, a ninth of to-day's price.

Mr. Moser, rated a first-rate farmer, has 160 acres on soil the colour of light chocolate. From one old cow he has built up, during twelve years, a good herd of twenty cattle without making any expensive purchases. He grows alfalfa, corn, tobacco, and keeps poultry, pigs and cattle. His income is 6,000 to 7,000 dollars; even his farm-hand gets 1,500 dollars. They're closely familiar with rain hereabouts; his brother Charles, a lieutenant

in the American Army, wrote from England saying he'd seen no rain heavier than a mist or a drizzle!

There's another farmer lives nearby who, after a drink or two, talked of Roosevelt—Roosevelt the Great, he called him.

A listener said: "You must mean Theodore Roosevelt."

"No—Franklin," he said.

"What about the National Debt—do you know about that?" said the questioner. "You know the *size* of it?"

The tipsy farmer quoth: "Size of it? Well, why worry about it? Why not *enjoy* it?"

Old Mr. Moser, Senior, has humour, too. Their former farm is submerged; a T.V.A. dam washes over it now. "So you've had to move, then, have you?" he was asked.

"Well, I suppose so," he said. "It was either that, or going home by submarine."

The third farmer I met was Bruce Curry—a man farming 349 acres, the same farm his family have had these ninety years. He stood thoughtfully on the lorry whence he was unloading a hundred bags of phosphate. "You took a pounding over there," he said. And then, in the sun and wind, I found myself telling him about London and what Winston said: "And we'll hit them over the head with bottles, for we have nothing else." I told him of what the old cocks are doing, and the women, and of what the R.A.F. lads said in the Battle of Britain, and of how they were lifted exhausted from their aircraft and fed with stimulants and went up once more. And when I looked at him again, tears were in his eyes.

All these farmers spoke well of T.V.A. one said: "I reckon it's the best thing has happened to us since the Civil War. The war knocked us down and T.V.A. lifted us up."

Atmosphere hung about that small town. The yellow school bus lacked paint—reminded me of Ireland. A train went by, its engine joggling the great black bell on its head.

"I believe I will," an American will say as he takes a cigarette.

In Knoxville the restaurant menu says: "This is (the date)—one day nearer Victory."

A monument is headed: "Our Beloved Physician."

An electric sign flashes in and out saying: "Jesus died for you."

In the mountains the word "poke" is still used. "Put him in a poke," they say, meaning a bag.

March 22nd, 1944.

I rose at 4 a.m. to travel to Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The taxi came on the dot; and I had coffee with workmen in a drug-store near the railway station. In the Pullman coach everybody still slept behind drawn curtains. My travelling companion introduced himself and shook hands—a pleasant young man who would like to see federated together Britain, Canada, the United States and, if possible, France; said he was Scotch by origin—wore a plaid tie, as many Scots do over here. Our journey was through the Smoky Mountains—hillsides studded with mountain oak and pine; occasional white houses. The first sleeper to rise was a woman from Minnesota. When she joined us, the Scot promptly introduced himself and me, and she inquired of me almost with asperity: "How do you like our country?" She has a boy in Africa, serving in the ground crew of the Air Corps. Wasn't it wonderful, she said, that boys who had been used to having *everything* should say they enjoyed the Army? I asked her what Minnesota thought of the war, but she said she hadn't been there for so long, she didn't know. I thought of Captain Ralph Ingersoll's remarks at the close of his book, *The Battle is the Pay-off*—that American soldiers are committed to the war physically, but not spiritually, and that he thinks that reflects the civilian attitude at home. Some sound summing-up there, I think.

But I met an American major in the Air Corps on that train who is committed with a vengeance. He's one of the few folk who saw the war coming and began to get ready in earnest. He told me that when he was a lad of twenty-one he worked on an oil-tanker sailing to Mexico, the Caribbean, and back to New York. Among its crew were two Germans, one the Chief Engineer. On Sundays those two men used to don German military uniforms. "I've seen them," he said, "goose-stepping up and down the tanker's deck." The spectacle irritated him, and he made some remark that angered them. One said to him: "The day will come." This American is a thick-set, short man, grey eyes, wavy hair, Irish by birth; thirty-five now. He returned to America and gave up the sea. When trouble began to brew two or three years before the war, he started to learn to fly. He'd always wanted to fly; now, he took four flying certificates in one year, including an instructor's licence. He told his friends the war was coming,

but they laughed, said he was nuts. He spent all his money learning to fly, gave up a business he had started, and for that whole year earned nothing and spent what he had. He joined the National Guard, and instructed in flying. When he could do so, he joined the Army. He's had to fight to get into combat troops; but he has succeeded, and has had his aircraft squadron and his group. He fought to get on to four-engine craft, strove to go overseas. Now he's going, and he's glad he's going, although he's got three children, one a boy only four months old. He told his story in jerks, and ejaculated, "All right" between one sentence and another. He said he had gambled everything on this war—his business, even his wife and family; he'd been afraid the show would be over before he got there. No doubt about his sincerity. He wanted to know if he'd be able to get cigars supposing he landed in England? He guessed he'd miss milk the most. When the train stopped at 6 p.m. we went for a meal in the town of Greensborough, and he ate a tenderloin steak that must have weighed 1 lb.—that's to say, he ate most of it, for we had to bolt for the train; but not before he had bought two handfuls of cigars and thrust half of them on to me. I asked whether he'd rather go to Europe or the Pacific—for he doesn't know his destination. He said he'd prefer to go to Europe and, after cleaning that up, tackle the Japs. He's got a grudge against the Japs, he said; they've got a pal of his a prisoner from whom he hasn't heard for eight months.

It was past midnight when the bus drove into Chapel Hill. The bus was crowded with munitions workers. The young woman next to me said: "People here don't know what the war is about, and I don't think they want to know." We talked of the Negroes, and I said I understood the Mammies were very good with children. She said: "The Mammies aren't Mammies now; they're young girls if you can get them at all; the Mammies are all doing jobs that bring in more money." Chapel Hill was quiet and at peace—spacious roads lined with trees, windows glinting in the dark, a little rain falling. It might have been a bit of Cambridge before the war.

*March 23rd, 1944.*

I'm now in Chapel Hill, the seat of North Carolina University. This inn is owned by the university. Chapel Hill is the university, or very rly so. That, I think, is something to be

glad about. They are a go-ahead lot here. I've just left Dr. Howard W. Odum, who is Professor of Sociology; his job, among others, that of making a survey of the South—its people, its economy, its trends; a burly, bustling thinker of a man, remindful of Bragg or Rutherford in build. The world is appallingly ignorant of itself, and our countries likewise. As Dr. Odum sees it, regions have got to grow strong and give their strength to the nation, and the nation, in its turn, from a stronger, centralised strength must give back another strength—the root purpose to build a strong U.S.A. He took me in to see the array of books his department have turned out; some fifty fine books beautifully printed and bound—*The Tragedy of Lynching* was one of them, the monumental *Southern Regions of the United States* another. I said: "But who reads these fine books? Does one-tenth of one per cent. read them?" They doubted it. I said: "You'll have to make more documentary films as a way of getting the stuff into people's heads." Dr. Rupert B. Vance, who has just finished a book he started in 1935 on the Southern peoples, is about to begin another on the demagogues of the South since the Civil War—about a dozen in number. What a subject! One can see Huey Long veritably pinned down. Dr. Vance said the South is sometimes called "The Fighting South"—they were in favour of war against Hitler long before the North was; the Gallup polls showed that. The South headed the voluntary enlistments.

Maybe that's not unnatural. The cynics may say: Why should the South fight Hitler when the South used Hitlerian intolerance towards the Negro? But there's more to it than that. The South knows what defeat means—the South was defeated in the Civil War, and there are parts of the South which have never got over it psychologically. Some commanding officers in the South have had to rule out the Civil War as a subject their men may talk about! Too many fights result. Besides, the South is mainly of Anglo-Saxon origin. No sixty-one nations in cities of the South, as there are in Chicago. (But, of course, there are Latins—Spaniards, French along the seaboard towards Louisiana and elsewhere.) In the Appalachian Mountains phrases that are Elizabethan survive; so do the old songs and snatches of music and dances, almost unchanged till not long ago, though they are changing now. And there's this strange fact: the Anglo-Saxons of the rural South are the most prolific folk in the country! (Someone has said: "They laboured, sang and procreated.") There's no state in the South where the blacks outnumber the whites, though there may be one or two counties



in states where that is true. Of the twenty-five millions in the South, only about eight millions are Negroes.

I asked Dr. Vance where hope for the future lies—for the South which was ravaged and ruined by the Civil War remains comparatively poor. He thinks in the increased industrialisation of the South (the war has begun this, or expedited it); in projects such as T.V.A.; in the infiltration into the South of other white peoples, a move which may be expected to mitigate the Southern whites' concentration of thought on the Negro problem—for they would then discover there are other problems. Dr. Vance said that while, for some time, the intellectual Negroes of the South and the whites have been able to get along, that isn't true of the middle-class or lower-class whites. The war has sharpened rather than dulled the conflict there, and the attitude of even Southern liberals has been disappointing.

Dr. Odum is himself a learned authority on the South. He wrote in 1930 *An American Epoch*, which crowded into 379 pages the South's history from 1850 onwards. At the close of that book he foresaw a South seeking to do all things *well* rather than a few things *big*; a South which appraised work higher than talk, truth more than dogma, integrity more than acclaim; a South not afraid to do its thinking in pioneer fields; a South devout with *religio poeta*, with the humility of the scientist. Some implicit criticism of the more noisy America the world is acquainted with in that, I trow! Dr. Odum didn't stop there; he published last year a book, *Race and Rumours of Race*, wherein he examined the rumours of Negro arsenals, of secret lynchings, gang riots, ice-pick wars, black-out massacres, sex assaults, secret societies plotting revolt, of "Eleanor Clubs," and in this examination of racial tension from 1942 to 1943 he found much rumour false, but the general situation grave, and he saw three groups as blameworthy: the new Negro better aware of his potentialities and proud of his artistic achievements, the Northern agitator campaigning for the Negro's right to the Four Freedoms, and the old white South, unwilling to relinquish old habits. Dr. Odum wants truth to be faced wherever found, he wants "a new covenant reached through scientific and co-operative endeavour . . . leaving no place for bitterness or hate or for flight from that reality which is America's heritage."

I should rank Dr. Odum with the best men I've met in America, full of enlightenment and full of courage. In January he helped to found, and became President of, a Southern Regional Council centred at Atlanta, Georgia—a council to

promote greater unity, equal opportunity for all peoples, to reduce racial tension and racial distrust and to develop and integrate leadership. Its charter runs for thirty-five years. It has two Joint Directors, Dr. Guy Johnson of Chapel Hill (who has gone to Atlanta) and Dr. Ira Reid, a Negro of Chicago. The Board is half white and half Negro. You have to come to America to realise what a move forward this is. All the same, I should judge that Odum has his feet firmly on the ground. He is impatient of some of America's intellectuals who are too naïve (as he sees it) to realise how tough and involved this problem is. "In race, religion and sex" (he said to me) "there is no one answer—there are many answers; no 'yes, no,' no 'you, me,' no 'right, wrong.' There's no man who has tried to make the answer 'now' who didn't crack here"—and he smiled and tapped his forehead. He gave me an instance within his own family. "Dr. Charles S. Johnson, the Negro scholar, was coming here, and I invited him to stay with me at home. That was six years ago now. I asked my wife. 'Sure,' she said. I asked my graduate son. 'Sure,' he said. I asked my daughter. 'Sure,' she said. Then I asked my boy who was fourteen, going to high school. 'Can't do it, Pop,' he said. 'Can't be done.' That's it. The college boys and girls are all right. But the primary school children and the farmers and factory workers—no, they won't have it. In some ways the South is further from the nation than it was in 1920; it looks sometimes as though it's prepared to sacrifice its prosperity in order to fight the Negro. The remedy will only be found through work; not by arguments—because people never agree; not by intellectuals in the North telling the South what it must do—irreparable harm has been done by them; not by the simple introduction of new industries. You mustn't talk about race—that's bad. You must get to work. The solution will only come through working together, building things up, building up new industries, new sorts of farming, new big projects like T.V.A.—work that brings men of all sorts together in developing the South." He had another good thing to say: "When people tell me something 'won't work,' I just laugh. Nothing works. One American family in five breaks up, but we don't scrap the family. Nothing works—that's to say nothing works to perfection. But try it—see what it will do. It will do part of the work, anyhow." This work for the South must be worked out on a regional basis, but, in his view, that's the very opposite of a shut-in, sectional basis. People have got to turn a mental somersault in thinking of what "regional" means. A nation can only grow strong as its regions are strong.

I asked him what part regionalism is going to play in building the post-war world—was he for federations, did he favour Western Europe, Britain, and Scandinavia, France and Belgium, etc., forming one union? I understood him to say they'd have to find out what their resources are, what their communications are, whether they're suitable to make "a region." If they are, very well. He said, again: "People will say it won't work—and it won't; but will it work enough, will it take us part of the way?" The League of Nations was not, he said, in any sense a regional scheme—it was a God-like, arbitrary business. I said: "But we shall have to have something like it, something on those lines."

I spoke again of the need for getting the wisdom and knowledge of his department and his kind into the craniums of millions of folk, of the absurdity of it lodging in small cloisters and studies. "You and the layman," I said, "will both have to move towards one another. You'll have to write in different language, speak with different words, use the ready means of dissemination—films, for instance." (Six films of one reel each exist on the six regions of U.S.A., but the cost is 50 dollars a reel—reasonable as prices go, no doubt, but too high for the pockets of a good many schools.)

In a paper he wrote on "Sociology in the Contemporary World," Dr. Odum remarks that it has been said that planning is not new because Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau and Machiavelli had plans, but, he says, social planning *is* new, in the sense that for the first time it has available the results of research in the social sciences. (Something there for the enemies of planning to bite on.) Elsewhere he writes: "Regionalism then becomes the primary tool for American planning, flexible in time and geography. . . . It becomes a tool for the redistribution of wealth and opportunity . . . and a sort of fourth wheel of American government in which there is added to the judicial, the administrative and legislative, the advisory groups whose personnel, both in number and distinction, shall parallel those of the Supreme Court and members of the Cabinet. . . ."

One more thing he said to me: "There's no *evidence* that any substance lies in theories of racial superiorities."

To-night I attended in the Little Theatre of the University the first performance of three one-act plays written by serving soldiers, and acted by members of the Carolina Playmakers—all young people. The audience was young, too—boys and girls in their early twenties for the most part. Between the plays

they were invited to say what they thought of the play direction or of the play. They spoke without nervousness, tho' words uninspired and thought ordinary. I don't find usually that Americans speak awfully well; rarely is eloquence found. However, they spoke readily, and that's a good deal. Great friendliness was abroad. Professor Frederick H. Koch, who directs the Drama Department of the University (and how excellent that such a thing exists), is a short man with greying, wavy hair, and an expansive warmth. He persuaded the young men and women who had directed the plays to explain what they had been at. The general standard of play and acting was a shade lower, maybe, than prevails in the winning plays of the local festivals of the British Drama League. Two of the plays dealt with young soldier life in U.S.A. In both it was plain at how youthful an age Americans sometimes marry. In the first play mother-love for her soldier son was a theme, and truth lay in it, for she thought manoeuvres were dreadful, and that to be recalled from leave was monstrous. Everybody in the play seemed to assume that he would come back home from the war safely. I suspect that the fact that he might not was avoided by the author as too painful. The second play treated of barrack-room life, and portrayed drunkenness, the reading of other men's mail, and the threat to go absent without leave of a young soldier whose wife is dying. This youth, not unnaturally, has something to say about this being the same old war to end war, and, as there'll be another war after this, what are the odds? The third play was cool and satirical. It pictured a funeral with chanting at the graveside, a mother who argued with the priest over which psalm he should read, and a pall-bearer who said the dead man wasn't the sort of man who would be acquainted with *any* psalms, or, indeed, the difference between a prayer and a hymn. When the priest said God had called the dead man home, the pall-bearer, in an aside, remarked that *he* wouldn't like it if he, the pall-bearer, were called home by being run over by a train, as the dead man was. After a brief black-out, we saw the dead man fully clothed and in his right mind sitting on his coffin talking to himself, and waiting to be fetched by the angels. My young neighbour, a student chemist, said if he'd had his way he'd have given this play first prize instead of third. But I doubt if the audience would. This nation has a wide streak of what's called "a Bible belt."

March 24th, 1944.

I lunched with Professor Koch and his assistant, Professor Samuel Selden, and much enjoyed it; so much so that I was tempted to say that when I am born again I will come to Chapel Hill to take my degree in dramatic art—for that can be done. At Chapel Hill dramatic art ranks with economics or philosophy. I wish this were true in some English university. Is it strange that so many of London's plays come from New York? For the fact is that where playwriting is encouraged—as in the neighbourhood of a good repertory theatre—dramatists will arise. And where playwrights are taught, there, once in a while, a good dramatist will be created also. At Chapel Hill, under Koch, studied Paul Green, author of *In Abram's Bosom*. Thomas Wolfe, the novelist, who wrote *Look Homeward, Angel* and *Of Time and the River*, and Betty Smith, whose new book, *A Tree grows in Brooklyn*, is a current best-seller, were here for a time also. (Betty Smith came as a Federal Board writer, I am told, during the depression. She was a mother of two children. She wrote pot-boiling plays most of her time to earn her daily bread, but before breakfast each day she wrote a piece of *A Tree grows in Brooklyn*. Thus are good works so often born, with agony and bloody sweat! Thomas Wolfe struggled to be a dramatist and, on the whole, failed as one. But he turned out to be a fine novelist. Maybe he had too much splurge, too many words, too little discipline to be a playwright. Not often can a man be both. Talking about reincarnation (I wish it were true), I'd like to live another life as a doctor of medicine, one as an old country lawyer to whom folk pour out their hearts and tell of their scandalous behaviour, and a third as a landscape painter. This last Koch would like to be, too. So we are arranging to be born together and live in Chapel Hill, or Sussex or the Hebrides—we aren't sure which. He told me of meeting Johnston Forbes-Robertson when he, Koch, was a young man. Forbes-Robertson declared he was leaving the stage to be a painter—he had wanted badly to be a painter for some time.

Koch sees plainly, and teaches, that young men and women should write about that which they know, and of the neighbourhood and folk they know. Raise up a graveyard of dead men and recreate them, and what drama lies there! He sees that the good local is the universal. As I said to him, "Wasn't *A Midsummer Night's Dream* local? Aren't Sean O'Casey's plays local?" Surely. Everything is local to some place or other, but the good local is by that reason universal. Birth, death, hunger,

cold, marriage, love, the way of a man with a maid, the monstrous ruthlessness of men with ageing women—these are among the fundamentals and the universals. Treat of them, and your subject cannot be wrong. So that, when I am told my Lancashire novels are too local, I am infuriated. Lancashire men must speak and act as Lancashire men, but the motives and the spirit that moves them are the same as move men in South Africa or the North-west Frontier.

Thomas Wolfe, when a student, quoted Koch as saying to his class: "I can't tell you how to write a play. There's only one real way—go ahead and write it. You know enough to get started—and starting is the hardest part. I can only advise you to draw up a synopsis of your plot and wade right in. Go on through to the end without stopping, if possible. Then go back, expand, revise, condense. Then bring it before the class and read it." That is the method, to subject the play to round-table criticism; and Koch says that students are the best critics in the end. At the end of each term, six one-acters are done before an audience—Experimental Play-production it's called—and the audience are invited to speak their minds about it, and about the direction and the acting—and they do. The author can defend himself—and does. There was a time when H. L. Mencken called the South "The Sahara of the *beaux arts*." It is not that now.

For twenty-five years Koch has been teaching play-writing. He did it at North Dakota before he came here; there, he had Maxwell Anderson as a student-actor. At Chapel Hill his Playmakers have produced over 500 original one-act plays and many full-length plays also.

Among the work provided for jobless men during the great depression was building Chapel Hill's Forest Theatre. In dedicating that theatre, Dr. Frank P. Graham, President of this North Carolina University, said: "This Forest Theatre represents both a peaceful social revolution, or New Deal, in behalf of the forgotten millions who do the work of the world; and a dramatic revolution whose folk-plays give voice to the life and work of the forgotten people who are the basic stuff of our common life. . . ." He spoke of dramatists creating "out of our own times plays of the people, white and coloured, on farms and in factories—any people, just as they are, their wrongs and their nobility, their fun and their laughter, their struggles and their hopes." In this Forest Theatre, under the skies, the tragi-comedy of life springs forth. When Koch, at the beginning of America's war, went to talk to the university's

Dean of Administration, he feared that his dramatic workshop might be shut down or grievously affected. But the Dean said: "We need it now more than ever." Not a penny was cut. True wisdom there. For how shall man fight if his spirit is not sustained?

I've been reading—with difficulty and without pleasure—*Under Cover*, a 3½-dollar book exposing the Nazi and Japanese underground in the U.S.A. I remember Charles Morton of the *Atlantic Monthly* telling me the book had shaken the country. I don't know as to that, but if such a book were written on England, it would create a storm—not that it could, in fact, be written on England. About half the book tells of machinations *after* Pearl Harbour. The *New York Times*, in reviewing it, said: "Of the hundreds of persons he exposes, most are still free and carrying on their dirty work. Those who neglected to take them seriously enough in Europe are dead, in concentration camps, in hiding or in exile." Clifton Fadiman said: "If enough of us read him, perhaps we can avert a civil war which American Fascists, with the help of Axis agents, are deliberately preparing." But a good number of those whom Carlson named have since been arrested by the Federal Bureau, and, as I noted the other day, about a score await trial as Quislings. The link-up of men and women who, while professing to be ardent Americans and Christians, are anti-Negro, anti-Jew, anti-British, anti-liberal and, in short, Fascists or the raw material of Fascism, is disconcerting, to put it mildly. This is an ugly book, a courageous book. The author worked in the underworld himself, and was accepted by those he throws a searchlight on. He gives names of several Senators, Congressmen and industrialists who are ranked among those he describes as doubtful, to say the least of it. He notes that up to July, 1942, a total of 9,405 Axis agents, American-born and foreign, had been arrested and legally dealt with.

One may comment that a tragedy of the situation is that American mothers who are haters, and rightly haters, of war, become too often the tools of the Fascists, advocating what is really defeatism, and not realising that were we defeated all they prize would be gone for generations.

By the way, when I asked a professor friend how folk are feeling about the war, he said that he was with a group a night or two ago which included university teachers, a writer and a young naval lieutenant back from the Pacific. He was surprised, he said, to find how much admiration of dictatorship

there was among the teachers: they felt that democracy was not working well, and they admired the Russian method of getting things done. (But I'll wager if one put it so bluntly to them they would shy off and say, "No, no. We didn't say that!") The writer thought we are in a period of violence and that only violence will work post-war. The lieutenant at first said that he was disillusioned—he had gone out to war full of enthusiasms, but found that war was just boredom and doing pettifogging jobs, and the war had become no more than a chore; all the same, as he talked, and the evening wore on, he again said that he believed something good would emerge from it all. The professor had this encouraging thing to say: that everywhere the bulk of people are strong for Anglo-American co-operation.

*March 25th, 1944.*

The bus was due to leave Chapel Hill at 9.5 a.m. It left at 9.30, and within a mile had broken down. But none of us knew that for a long time. We sat on and sweltered. Nobody spoke. We were as silent as a crowd of English. Indeed, we sat there for some seventy-five minutes. Not a soul growled. Two girls in fur coats left the bus, and sat on the pavement to eat ices—Lord knows where the ices came from—and a couple took out a go-cart and wheeled their baby about.

The route to Raleigh (named after Sir Walter Raleigh) was through a countryside that might have been Surrey in June—except for the advertisements, one of which, for a cooling drink, read, spaced out in four jumps:

*"Iceman's grandson,  
Now full-grown,  
Has cooling system  
All his own."*

Another was that of a funeral monument maker: "A monument speaks from ages past to ages yet unborn." America's preoccupation with death is considerable. But so is the Chinese. And my native Lancashire can enjoy a good funeral, too.

Americans like to cut out what seems superfluous. Thus they say "twenny," "wunnerful," "funnamental."

I saw a big Negro workman smoking an equally large cigar. Cigar-smoking is one of the luxuries. I estimate that a 5-cent cigar here equals one costing 120 cents or say five shillings in Britain.



At the American universities I feel that I have reached my spiritual home. I am more at ease than at English universities—friendliness is greater, pomposity less. And not only at universities. I'm now sitting in the train in shirt sleeves. It is hot, and we have all taken our jackets off.

It was dark when we reached Williamsburg, but Dr. Warner Moss, Chairman of the Political Science Department, was on the railway station to greet me—this is typical American courtesy—and drove me to the Brafferton Guesthouse, where I am now installed; a bare room with a student's bed. Nothing suits me better. Dr. Moss laments that he's unable to get from Britain (or Eire, is it?) the proceedings of the Irish Trades Union Council, and wonders what stickiness it is that prevents it. He said to me also that I should be surprised at some of the answers of students in a recent paper. They were asked to draw a ring round places on the map where American troops were fighting unaided by other Allies. A number ringed Italy, Burma, and New Guinea! When Dr. Moss spoke recently of the United Nations' fight against Germany, a student commented: "Yes, to the last American." Dr. Moss pointed out to him that people in Europe have been fighting for America for a long time, and the remainder of the class took that view also. The interrupter had no supporters.

A scholar gave me his view that never has he been so disheartened about the future as now; for, he said, America has no foreign policy. He thought the United States might go through a time of violence at home after the war, but violence out of which something better than the nation has known hitherto might possibly emerge.

I hope that our British newspapers post-war will develop the columnist. An American columnist, C. E. Fisher, has just published a book about his brethren. Drew Pearson's stuff, he says, appears in 621 papers selling eighteen million copies, Walter Lippmann's in 150 papers selling ten millions, Westbrook Pegler in 174 papers selling ten millions, Walter Winchell in 800 papers selling twenty-five million copies. Several others are read by five to ten millions every day, among them Dorothy Thompson. *Time*, noting these facts, says that two unmistakable trends operate—increasing sterility of editorial expression in all but a few journals, and the taking over of editorial function by syndicated columnists. I think myself that most American columnists work too hard, write too often and too much. Among

them, they cover the field—liberal, reactionary, sensational, social; even sober journals don't confine themselves to one columnist, but often print several, so that if you don't like what's in one column, you may enjoy what's in another. Hard to say how far this is true catholicity, and how far the commercial touch.

*March 26th, 1944.*

On this beautiful morning, like an English May or June, I strolled down to see the Capitol at Williamsburg, where was centred part of America's fight for independence. In this building it was that Patrick Henry, a rising young lawyer, stood on May 30th, 1765, to propose a series of resolutions denouncing the Stamp Act. Henry declared that the sole right to levy taxes rested in the inhabitants of America, and that any attempt to vest that authority elsewhere tended to destroy both British and American freedom. He is reported to have cried: "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third . . ." (Here shouts of "Treason!" interrupted him. He went on) ". . . and George the Third may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it. Give me liberty or give me death." But I am assured that, in truth, he did not finish quite so dramatically. He said something like this: "If this be treason, I would have you realise that I am an Englishman, and in my country, etc." (We often to-day condemn journalists for their sensationalism and dressing up of the story. But has not the story been dressed up in all history? I suspect it has. Was it Charles who apologised for being such an unconscionable time a-dying? Or did one of his friends invent or embroider it or mishear him? Of course, he may have uttered it, and I trust he did. But it would be strange if our records of olden days were more accurate than those to-day. A bit of what I've heard ironically called "honest faking" has seldom gone amiss.)

The Capitol has been re-created as it was in the eighteenth century. The bricks of those days were compounded of road dust, and were soft to the touch; blue glazed bricks set off the red. The building has a fine dignity and solidarity and sufficient good taste to make you proud of the human spirit. The council chamber is modelled on the House of Commons, and albeit small by comparison, is most excellently contrived, neatness and richness woven together, chairs solid yet wrought with some delicacy. Those ancients did themselves uncommonly well; I felt pleased they were of Anglo-Saxon stock. I dare say they had their eccentrics. Certainly forty years later they

had—one Lucy Ludwell Paradise who came from London bringing her coach with her, housing it in a hall she built as an addition to Ludwell-Paradise House, which still stands. She insisted on callers sitting with her in the coach as she had it rolled to and fro in the hall. Her other distinguishing feature when in London (it is said) had been the directing of boiling water from her tea urn on to gentlemen who didn't find favour in her eyes. In the account of the public gaol, it's recorded how a Negro slave died of frostbite, how men were hanged for horse-stealing and burglary, although, with first offenders, burning in the hand was sometimes substituted as a mark of leniency. Another Negro woman was imprisoned for a year before it was discovered she was held principally as a witness in another case. To this prison was brought Henry Hamilton, British Governor of the North-west, after his capture at Fort Vincennes. He was lodged for a year, and kept a journal wherein he indulges his humour. He tells of a Mr. Collins, one of several who shared his first cell with him. Collins had "been a drummer in the British Service, but having deserted no doubt for very prudential reasons and finding the provincial pay insufficient for the support of a man of pleasure, had fallen upon a method of setting that matter right by counterfeiting the current money of the State." I find this circumambient understatement delicious. He goes on: "They were all very fond of Mirth and Rum, the latter greatly promoting the former . . . so laying down in our wet cloaths on the boards we passed the night as well as we could."

During the afternoon Dr. Moss drove us over to Jamestown where was founded the first permanent English settlement in America in 1607. Jamestown island is, in looks, uninspiring and somewhat swampy, and maybe it was largely accident that put those intrepid men and women ashore on it. Captain John Smith, who led them—what finer English name could he have borne?—thrusts his bearded visage towards the sea, and the Indian Princess Pocahontas is sculptured also, this maid who was but twelve years old when she succoured them. This bit of old story you can piece together as you wander to and fro. Pocahontas might be termed a Quisling, I suppose, for these folk of ours were invaders to whom she gave help. Moreover, seven years after, she married John Rolfe, who was Secretary of State. But alas! she died at twenty-two, and Rolfe himself survived her only five years. I am touched by this story. Men and women will not cease to love and fall in love wheresoever

they be or whatsoever colour their skin. Rolfe it was who sent the first shipment of tobacco to England. There was another noble youth, a Thomas Savage, who was sent as a hostage to the chieftain, and such was Savage's fearlessness that he was, after a while, treated like a son.

The mocking-bird was singing and chirruping when I was wandering by this river, and the cardinal bird in his brilliant red plumage sat on a bush near the old church tower. These men and women hadn't been long in America before they built this church, of hand-made bricks and mortar laid in English bond. You may see the loopholes they fitted in the tower for firing at the Indians, for they said their prayers and kept their powder dry in the English tradition—just as Cromwell disembowelled folk in the name of the Lord. Um! The sea has worn away chunks of this precious soil, and to-day an ancient cypress tree, which at one time stood on land, stands forlorn and black twenty or thirty yards out in the river. The old graveyard holds those called Harrison, Berkeley, Ludwell, Byrd, and the bones of the Rev. James Blair, who founded William and Mary College, where I am staying, and those of William Sherwood, who described himself as a great sinner. So are we all, though we don't as a rule boast of it.

At the inn where I lunched I was waited on by a charming lad who told me he studies at the college and is a waiter two days a week. He earns a dollar a day, plus—on Sundays—about 3½ dollars in tips. College youths do all the kitchen work, too. Excellent, this American way of working yourself along the road. These lads have made a lot of the explosive mines, too, that were laid in North Africa.

To-night at supper we had a historian, a lawyer and Quaker, and a professor of political science. America, in their view, will not go into any world political group or organisation except as she is thrust in by helping to feed the world or by doing something else of a practical working character. Her entry will have to be gradual; once involved, she will keep on collaborating—so they think. Among other views expressed were that Canada will go with the United States rather than with Britain if the choice has to be made. Churchill, said one, shows signs of feeling very insecure. This man thought it possible that Stalin may be endeavouring to make it awkward for Churchill in an attempt to unseat him, hoping somebody he likes better or finds easier to deal with will replace him. It was to-day that Churchill broadcast. These men found his omissions disappointing. "If,"

said one, "there's an election in Britain in 1945, that speech has lost it for him." Another interesting—and to me surprising—view was that a world unity is unlikely because the three great powers, Russia, the United States and the British Commonwealth, all think they can get along without any such organisation—think they are strong enough to stand alone. I replied that, in my view, Britain does not feel strong enough and doesn't hold that view, that the Commonwealth is too dispersed and too vulnerable. Besides, what hopes lie in us all going our own sweet way?

They asked what the average Englishman feels about India. I said: "The average man is bored to tears with India and sick and tired of being vilified up and down the globe by Indians and by other folk who know next to nothing of the problem. Of course, the average Englishman knows nothing about India himself."

One of them who, I believe, is well-informed said we should be astonished to know how many Communists are entering Germany in the guise of workmen from France.

Other remarks:

"Poland will have to become integrated into a larger country, as the Scots did."

"I suppose the enemy are trying to get American soldiers involved in riots both in Northern Ireland and in India."

A young woman lecturer who found many of her class unsympathetic when she told them of America's responsibilities in world affairs, and of the part America should play, finally said to them: "If you don't agree with this, you'd better stop coming to this class and start rolling bandages for the next war."

*March 27th, 1944.*

This morning I spoke to about a hundred students who are from eighteen to twenty years old. I said that their freedom to listen and mine to speak would have vanished had we not fought this war. I said that the war was, quite simply, one against slavery. When I had done, a young man who obviously found this hard to swallow asked me how that could be. I said: "I suppose it's commonly granted that something called slavery used to exist in the Southern states of this nation. Would you think that the lives the Negroes lived were less ridden by cruelty and suffering than those of the Poles and Czechs and many Jews under German rule—since so many of these have been brutally exterminated? And if so wouldn't you call it slavery

or ten times worse than slavery?" But I don't know if he was convinced. I thought I sensed a good deal of scepticism and some cynicism.

*March 28th, 1944.*

When journeying from Richmond to Washington, I felt that I was riding a horse. My seat in the railway coach was at the end, and I have never in my life been so bounced up and down. Quite amusing. My liver must have been much improved. The landscape changed; the trees began to look like the trees of winter. I have turned Nature's clock back—I'm in reverse from spring. Much swamp near the railroad and closely forested, coniferous; wooden houses which no paint-brush has encountered. When it was close on darkness we were running past a lake that might have been Windermere, a bank of trees mirrored in the opal water.

*March 29th, 1944.*

I shook hands to-day with Mr. Roosevelt, President of the United States, and with Mr. John L. Lewis, the Mineworkers' leader. Not at the same time, however. I'm told they don't love one another. They are both impressive men. Mr. Roosevelt I saw no more privately than at his Press Conference. He said but little to me, and if he had said anything I could not have vouchsafed it. For that is the rule for private talks—"off the rekkud"—so it's pronounced by Americans from the President downwards. He holds this Press Conference at the White House in a small circular room with a domed ceiling. Frank McDermot, formerly an Irish Senator, and I were the two strangers at the conference to-day; we hadn't met since Dublin in 1941. McDermot said: "We shall be in the cattle-pit—they won't allow us in till all the regulars are assembled—lucky if you see anything." But we were more fortunate than that. We were in a side room when summoned, and were swept in on the stream. Some men executed a small run to get to the front row. Already when I entered they were standing three deep, the foremost of them virtually touching the President's table, on which stood bowls of tall red flowers. My height allowed me to see Mr. Roosevelt without difficulty. He was seated—he is always seated when the journalists enter. He sat pondering, not speaking. His is a fine face—good, strong, nothing coarse in it. The eyes are bluish-grey—maybe a touch of violet in them, as Lloyd George's have. He has a trick of pursing his mouth and another of puffing out his cheeks, a quick

little movement that may have something of a nervous tick in it. The face is large, squarish, much creased round the eyes, the nose big and well-shaped, rather aquiline, the forehead with nobility in it, and the hair, although now thin and mostly grey, still preserving a wave. As a young man he must have looked rather magnificent; to-day, at sixty-two, he's handsome. His enemies say he is vain; that may well be. He has cause. He was dressed with care, and looked beautifully clean—as though he has just bathed. His jacket was a fine tweed, green enough for the country, his shirt and soft collar pure white, his tied bow a spotted blue. He smoked cigarettes. Behind him was the circular window. Flanking it were two standards with a brass eagle on top. In front of the standards two plain-clothes bodyguards stood, and between them, seated, a rear-admiral. To the Admiral's left sat Stephen Early, Roosevelt's secretary, smoking a pipe. To the President's left at his own table was a secretary taking a shorthand note of what was said. Right and left along the curved wall were a few chairs, and these, seven or eight newspapermen occupied. But the remainder stood in a semicircle, nine or ten deep at their thickest, a few women in the front line—perhaps fifty or sixty all told, reporters, columnists, military correspondents; and the bulk of them working for papers opposed to the President. We stood and waited. Men round me had notebooks open and pencils poised. Presently a voice from the rear said: "All in"; and at once Mr. Roosevelt began to speak in a voice so quiet and low that I, no more than eight feet away, could barely distinguish his words, and those men at the back must have lost them. He was saying that he couldn't think of anything that had happened in the past few days except that Mrs. Roosevelt had got back from her journey in the Caribbean. He spoke about that for a moment or two—thought she'd done some good. That was about all—he couldn't think of anything else. Oh, and he'd got a touch of bronchitis. Somebody asked if he was worried about it. On this the President did a little kidding. In a serious fashion he said it was computed that in one case out of 48,000 it turned to pneumonia. He coughed a little—said that was what it was like. No, he wasn't worrying.

Questions now came swiftly; the young man on my right, who had planted himself dead centre and had a strong voice, addressed Mr. Roosevelt as though the President were 20 or 30 yards off instead of two, and with no more deference than if Mr. Roosevelt had been your humble servant. True, he

began: "Mr. President——"; but that was about all. Later on, another questioner asked how something fitted with what the President had said at some other time. But Roosevelt was never at a loss. He lost no temper and no time. After all, he's had twelve years' practice; and his wits are sharp and his humour keen. Several times he had the crowd laughing. A voice at the back said jokingly: "It's reported Stephen Early is running for Vice-President." Mr. Roosevelt inquired blandly after half a second's hesitation: "Is he a citizen?" as though to say: "Is he human?" He exploited this notion, tickled by his humour, kept glancing at Early. We laughed as an audience laughs at a judge's witticisms in court—a touch of duty in it.

A question was asked about the battle at Cassino. "I'll have to answer that off the rekkud," he said, and did. He mentioned a military correspondent's article printed to-day—said it was a good article. No highfalutin suggestion (as British politicians so often make) that he doesn't follow the papers. He corrected himself in giving that answer—did it quite pleasantly, unflurried. The National Service Act cropped up, and man-power. He said jobs had to be done and the men found. A good many people were doing nothing to help the war, and they ought to do some soul-searching about it. If folk were not mindful enough of the good of their souls, they had to be helped to mind them. This was the bluntest thing he said, sharp as a bayonet, and his eye had a curious mixture of gimlet and twinkle in it. His voice was very quiet and almost whimsical when he said it, and he turned his lean face with its rimless spectacles here and there, examining us. Then he stopped and waited for the next thrust. It was a kind of game. He listened carefully, reminding me sometimes of the attitude of a dog with ears cocked. He pulled the journalists' legs—including them in the suitable categories when he ran his mind over different sorts of men needed for harvesting. A woman reporter asked a follow-on question. Her female voice was the first we had heard, and it startled us. "Why, May, you should be harvesting," said Roosevelt quick as a knife, and there was a shout of laughter. I was told he enjoys all this, but it must be a strain, too. A lot of these men are trying to catch him out—and I've had some small first-hand experience during these few months in U.S.A. of what that duel is like. This cross-examination occurs twice a week; it hasn't the dignity of our House of Commons questioning of the Prime Minister, and whether it serves as good a purpose is arguable. But it is flattering to the newspapers and news-



papers hold a high place in U.S.A. The spirit of democracy is in it, too.

After ten or fifteen minutes of this quickfire questioning, the chairman of the journalists' association said abruptly: "Thank you, Mr. President"—and it was over. He terminated it, not the President. Whether Stephen Early had "tipped him off" that time was up, whether—as is more likely—he sensed that nobody had a further question, I don't know. One or two of us stayed behind to speak to the President; I was first introduced to Stephen Early, and afterwards taken round the end of the President's table. Mr. Roosevelt had no idea who I was, except that I was an English correspondent. He was charming. He has a fine hand that befits his face; he wanted to know how long I've been in America, and he made a few comments of a sanguine nature. He spoke intimately, as though he and I were having one or two confidences together to the world's exclusion; he has the gift of making you feel he likes you, swings round in his chair to you; then he turned to McDermot with the same smile and welcome. Not Lloyd George or Bernard Shaw can make himself more pleasant, and they're masters of the art. By the way, British journalists don't ask questions at Mr. Roosevelt's or Mr. Cordell Hull's Press Conferences.

John L. Lewis had gathered three assistants to meet me in his room at the Mineworkers' offices, Fifteenth Street. This room is on the sixth floor, and is very large, panelled halfway up with oak, and holding a broad fireplace whose red bricks reach the ceiling. The air is of an English country house—chairs and couches of brown leather. I told Lewis it reminded me of Chequers, the British Prime Minister's house. Lewis himself is a giant—a forest of eyebrows over piercing grey eyes, a heavy clean-shaven jowl, a mane of greying dark hair. He's very sallow; smoked three cigars during our hour's talk, chewed them up. He was dressed as carefully as an American big executive—dark-grey suit, thin watch-chain, white shirt and collar, enamelled black shoes. I suspect he had two of the three with him more as witnesses to our talk than for any other purpose, but the third, Major Tetlow, whose people came from Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, spoke more, in fact, than Lewis did. Major Tetlow is expert on facts of output and miners' wages; he said that the American miners are making all-time records in output, that no American workers have made such sacrifices for the war effort. Pre-war they worked at the coal face for thirty-five hours a week, with time spent going to and

fro additional. To-day they work at the coal face about eight hours longer. Their output he placed at 6 tons of coal a day for each man, whether above or below the surface.

I inquired their earnings. The first reply suggested about 57 dollars a week on the average, but on second thoughts, and having regard to lost time through injuries, and some men working less than a full week for other causes beyond their control, the figure was put at 47 dollars. A few men earn 9 dollars a day. The miners' average age they put at forty-five to fifty—a lot of young ones, they said, volunteered for the Army even before Pearl Harbour.

Lewis himself spoke only to give background. He said nothing momentous or in the least sensational. I didn't always agree with him. He's touched with arrogance. I pointed out some of our own difficulties in Britain—lack of man-power and of good food and our possession of old pits, some of them very deep.

Lewis has enemies, and that is understandable. He has the makings of a demagogue. He talks well, can hold your attention, possesses the Welsh sense of drama, and acts a bit in trying to fix you with his eye. His organisation stands aloof from both A.F. of L. and C.I.O. His union has some 600,000 members. I suspect he controls it to a degree that in a British trade union would be impossible. His earnings are equally disproportionate. But the American miners themselves earn two or three times as much as our own.

*March 30th, 1944.*

I spent an hour or two at Capitol Hill to-day watching Congress and Senate at work. Visiting Englishmen do not, I'm told, visit Congress enough. One Congressman has been known to growl that Congressmen seem to be looked on as lepers. First, I was taken to a Republican woman Congressman (if that Irishism is permissible). Compared with our own House of Commons members, these folk work in luxury. They draw a salary of 10,000 dollars a year plus an allowance of 6,500 dollars for secretaries. (Our own M.Ps. receive about one-sixth of that.) Each Congressman or Senator has two large workrooms. This woman has humour. When elected, she placed outside her door the two brass cuspidors which formed part of her furniture, and stood a ticket on them: "Please remove!" She talked to us fluently and with vivacity, mentioning those who say this isn't America's war, and that American boys are being killed for those English again, and that the English always take Americans for a ride, etc., but she was certain these are but

a minority and, judging by her mail-bag, that most folk *do* want to collaborate and want to know what Congress is doing about *that*. She was resentful of any suggestion that Americans should realise better than they do that this is their war. How could they be expected to realise it when they hadn't been bombed and Europe was so far off? There was even a small movement in Congress, she said, to stop the Second Front altogether. As I left, we stood and looked at a picture in her room of Thomas Dewey. She said: "He's a strong man—he'll make a good President." My next Congressman was a Republican, too—a solid man, with both feet on the ground, James Wadsworth by name, whose people came from Yorkshire in the sixteen hundreds. The Wadsworths were farmers, and are farmers now. Mr. Wadsworth was formerly a Senator, and was Chairman of a military committee of the Senate which sat after the last war. That Committee, after working for nine months taking evidence from a variety of ranks, ranging from sergeants up to General Pershing himself, came to the unanimous conclusion that the United States ought to have some mild form of compulsory military training. But when both political parties heard of it, they came down on it without hesitation, saying: "Look here! You can't do this—we'll all be against you. After all, there aren't going to *be* any more wars." So nothing was done. Mr. Wadsworth said the American Legion, the veterans, have favoured a strongly armed America throughout (five months' fighting in the last war taught them that lesson), and he's sure the American soldiers will return from this war of the same opinion. I asked whether he thinks that, allied to that view, will be the wish to collaborate in the international field, and he believes that will be so. We talked of the outlook regarding the Second Front. He warned people last night over the radio that we've been fighting only on the fringe so far, that the worst has still to come. He agreed entirely with my notion that Americans should be fully acquainted with British casualties—indeed, he attempted to get them published last January.

My next meeting was with a group of twenty Texas Democrat Congressmen with whom I lunched. My host was Mr. Ewing Thomason of El Paso, a ranking member of the Military Affairs Committee; near me was Mr. Richard Kleberg, who owns one of the biggest ranches in the world. Of his ranch it's said that during the last war the U.S. Government, in an emergency, sent to him for 50,000 cattle—an order sufficient to dismay any

ranch. But all that Mr. Kleberg's ranch inquired was: "What colour do you want 'em?"—which is typical Texas badinage. Mr. Thomason introduced me and called on me to respond. I enjoyed it, for they were very quick on the uptake and roared with laughter at the jokes. I spoke of the miracles we've achieved in this war by collaboration, and said there's little we cannot do if Russia and U.S.A. and ourselves stick together. Several Congressmen were good enough to say they agreed with every word.

Mr. Thomason kindly took me into the House of Representatives gallery, warning me that it was a dull day. Not more than a score were present on the floor. The Chamber is unworthy—a large, barish chamber, 150 years old, whose roof, in danger of falling in, has been strengthened by steel girders criss-crossing and painted light brown. This gives the roof the appearance of an English railway station. The floor is pale green, and brass cuspidors catch the eye. Members sit where they wish, and a member addressing the House can go and stand in front of the assembly, and use a loud-speaker. At the moment Judge Adolph Sabath of Chicago, Dean of the House, wherein he has sat for thirty-six years, was speaking. Towards his peroration he raised his hands to heaven and became impassioned; he made a curious spectacle in this empty chamber. On this day Miss Jessie Sumner spoke on a resolution to postpone the Second Front, saying: "The spark of hope that the British Prime Minister may execute a coup, perhaps by resigning, which would save the day and prevent the invasion going through on schedule, may prove to be a will-o'-the-wisp. . . . Since when must the American people depend for salvation upon a British Prime Minister, as if America were one of the more backward British colonies considered unworthy to enjoy self-government? Did any nation in history (she meant America) ever toss away lives of its citizens so wantonly?" Stalin had proposed an invasion of Western Europe; Churchill of Southern Europe. "Like the extravagant shopper who cannot choose between two hats, we adopted both plans. . . . War in Italy has already cost America some 100,000 lives." (It has, of course, done nothing of the sort. She must be including British lives, and at that it is probably exaggerated.) "The invasion may cost a million lives. . . . Who cares whether Europe is ruled by Stalin or Hitler? The difference between these two ambitious tyrants is not worth the life of a single American boy," etc.

I give this quotation as an example of what some wilder spirits in the United States say. Her resolution commends

very small support; it proposes to postpone the Second Front till Hitler and Stalin can be persuaded to "cough up" (her phrase) their aggressions, Hitler to be persuaded by bombing and Stalin by a restricted Lend-Lease and postponement of the invasion.

The Senate House is a nobler chamber, though here also iron girders at the moment disfigure the roof. Each Senator has his own mahogany desk; the room has some dignity and solidity; but neither this chamber nor the House of Representatives is in keeping with the nation's size and importance—nor its other splendours, those of a nation which built the Lincoln Memorial, and has within it the Rocky Mountains and the deserts of Arizona. Mr. Henry Wallace, Vice-President, acts as Speaker. I watched him enter, run his fingers through his strong, bushy hair and smite his table with a small mallet to signal business to start. On the steps leading to him sat three or four page-boys in knickerbockers and long black stockings. One or two chewed their gum vigorously. Their work is to carry documents from one part of the chamber to another, and when they move they sometimes move at a run, as mischievous as traditional choir-boys. Acoustics are so poor that members frequently cross the chamber to hear what a Senator is saying, and the shorthand writer perches himself on a chair close by.

The cuspidors of the Congressmen are brass. Those of the Senators are coloured blue. I am assured that cuspidors are nothing like so numerous as thirty years ago. The Englishman who said so added a wise thing—that it's useless and pointless comparing England and the United States. America must be judged on where she started from, how far she has gone, and whither she is going.

Hollywood is not to be left out of the violent political controversies of the day. The forum at the moment seems to be the advertising space of the *Hollywood Reporter*. The Motion Picture Alliance for the prevention of the spread of subversive and un-American ideas by "communists, radicals and crack-pots" has been given a counterblast by the Hollywood Writers' Association. Another group, the Free World Association of Hollywood, took half a page on March 17th. They describe themselves as anti-Fascist, anti-Communist, non-partisan and non-political. They want an end to appeasement or a negotiated or easy peace, an end to American isolationism, they desire

active opposition to attacks upon our Allies, and assert their awareness of the interdependence of all peoples in a modern world. They say a great deal more, all of it excellent. Its sponsors include James Hilton, Walter Wanger, Kenneth MacGowan, Dick Powell, Rosaline Russell, Walter Huston, Ernst Lubitsch, Charles Boyer, James Cagney and Marc Connelly.

*March 30th, 1944.*

I had a cup of tea with Lord Halifax to-day. I wanted to tell him my views—for what they may be worth—on the film situation *vis-à-vis* America; my feeling that we should be blunter and sturdier in our approach to U.S.A.; my fear that unless the view held by a host of Americans of Britain and our Commonwealth is changed, our future relations will be in jeopardy, and with them the world's peace. I said that it seemed to me that the American minority—if it is safe to assume it is a minority—still feel they are fighting England's war much more than their own, and this view would be conducive to their withdrawing yet once more into isolation.

I am 6 feet, but I found myself looking up at Halifax when we shook hands. He is a sombre figure, and has borne personal losses in this war which are enough to touch him with melancholy; but his long, solemn face can break into a smile. He listens well. He asked me to send him some notes, which I will do. But I am only too well aware how many reports are made by consuls and others on the state of American opinion and on what should be done. If actions kept pace with the reporting, we should get on better, I think, than we do.

As I waited to see Lord Halifax I ran into Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, High Commissioner for Canada, and I found myself next day travelling on the same train to New York. When I met him last he was Minister for Health, spending some of his evenings visiting London air raid shelters during the Blitz. He has the democratic friendliness that distinguishes many a Scot. He has good looks, courage, and youth—he's forty-two. But already he's been plagued by a nervous stomach—he had that old man's complaint, a duodenal ulcer, when he was thirty-four. I told him what I had been saying to Lord Halifax. He replied that only a day or two ago he told a Press Conference in, I think, Pittsburgh that we British ought to copy U.S.A. in three things—friendliness, frankness and toughness. The reporters said: "But we always thought it was

you British who were tough with us." They asked him what he thought of the outlook for Anglo-American relations post-war. He replied that sometimes they would be good and sometimes bad.

We talked on many subjects and found nothing on which we disagreed. When I said that I called myself a Radical he said: "I think Radical covers most of us." He was reading a volume of Jules Romain's *Men of Goodwill* and Harold Nicolson's book on making the last peace. MacDonald thinks fighting the war is simple compared with what'll come after. So do I. America and Russia, I suspect, are going to be as hard to handle as rogue elephants.

Many an Englishman over here has said to me when I have growled about our lack of backbone in dealing with America: "It is all appeasement. We've been appeasing them for years—and what do we gain by it? Nothing. The only thing they like and understand is firmness and resolution and bluntness. When we're soft they suspect us."

I was told in a high quarter to-day that when Eisenhower was inspecting a march past of Americans, French and British troops after the Tunisian campaign was won, first came the Americans looking good but a trifle sloppy, next the French, good but having sustained less than half our own losses, and third the British, headed by pipers and with our Guards marching as though they were trooping the colour on Horse Guards' Parade. Eisenhower watched, and as he did so tears filled his eyes. He turned to General Alexander and said: "Who the hell am I to command men like these?" That was a fine thing to say, and does him much honour, for any General may well feel humble in the presence of his troops. I talked the other day with Hanson Baldwin, Military Correspondent of the *New York Times*. He has lately animadverted on the quality of U.S. officers up to about the rank of major. I said: "So far as our finest British infantry go, it's difficult to find officers good enough for them. For there are always some fine men who will not take commissions, and where shall you readily find officers worthy to lead our tough, brave coalminers or our Scottish Highlanders or our wild Irishmen? The fact that a man can do some mathematics or read a map doesn't necessarily make him a leader of men."

Negro story. A Negro woman charged a man with rape. The Judge said: "I would like to be sure you understand the

seriousness of the charge. You know what rape is, I suppose?" "Sho, Judge, I knows," she said. "It jus' been rape, rape, rape, all de summer."

Robert Sherrod, in his book on Tarawa, quotes a sergeant who said that the war being written about in newspapers must be a different war from the one the sergeant saw. "Sometimes," says Sherrod, "I thought I could see a whole generation losing its faith in the Press." But faith in the Press has never been very pronounced. We infantrymen in the last war said what the sergeant said at Tarawa, though less politely.

A Southern Irishman who is shrewd puts the number of Eire men in our British armed forces at some 50,000. I had thought it much higher. The figure of 200,000 has often been used, and Irishmen in U.S.A. have jumped it to 250,000. My friend thinks this bunkum. There are, he said, probably 100,000 from Eire in British war plants, and about 150,000 in the National Guard. This being so, the figure for the British armed forces could hardly exceed 50,000 (so he argues). The Irish censorship in Eire has led to amusing essays in defeating it. No reference can be made to Eire men fighting, so that when one such man was saved when the *Prince of Wales* was sunk, his picture was given in a Dublin paper and he was shown in uniform and described as having been saved in the *Prince of Wales* boating accident. On another occasion, the Irish were described as Japs; seven were involved—"four from the south island and three from the north island." By the way, as I expected, some of the Irish in U.S.A. are already saying it was the British who put the Yanks up to asking for the Germans and Japs to be cleared out of Eire. An Eire man said to me: "We're ready to make greater sacrifices for our neutrality than America is to fight her war."

How often has an American said to me: "If only we could be bombed!"—this when lamenting slowness in reaching 100 per cent. war effort.

A representative of the Office of War Information's film department visited me to glean ideas on what sorts of pictures should be made to interpret U.S.A. to England. He said they've made a film on the dangers of venereal disease, but the Catholic League of Decency have got it banned. Another phrase: "We can show British documentaries to America, but we can't show our own. You've no idea how politics hamstring us."



I lunched with two experts on America's Labour problems. One of them, who led a trade union for thirty-odd years, gave me some figures of T.U. leaders' salaries. John L. Lewis's he put at 25,000 dollars plus expenses. The highest salary of all he rated at 30,000 dollars. But who can assess "expenses"? He conceded that, while most of the greater United States trade unions are well run, there are doubtless smaller ones where graft doth corrupt. For the war period, many of the conventions, or annual meetings, are in abeyance. The second expert spoke to me of certain trade unions with entrance fees for members—fees of 100 dollars, and sometimes more. There are unions which charge fees to apprentices, too.

A distinguished U.S. journalist gave me a few impressions of the American scene: "We need more frankness. Only plain speech is any good to Joe Stalin. In the past three months America has moved back, frightened by power politics in Europe and the rebuff to idealism.

"We haven't a single good American General.

"There's much criticism of the British Burma campaign, a good deal of it justified.

"Our censorship is troublesome—worse than the British, I think. One of our war correspondents has had to employ the form of fiction to say what he wishes to say."

*April 5th, 1944.*

New York this morning was lightly coated in snow; a mild blizzard has blown all day. Is this the last bite of winter? An angry nip. I've been renewing my acquaintance with the Irish, for I lunched with Diarmuid Russell and supped with Pamela Hinkson. Both have the gift of speech; she spoke of having finished a book on Ireland between having her finger-prints taken—this just before she came over. She loves this country, and its people—finds them much different from Americans in England. She's been touched by the way small extra delicacies at table are forced on her—she's been reduced to carrying to her bedroom small cakes she didn't wish them to know she was unable to eat! Charming; she has a pale, roundish face (this good American living!), with fine grey eyes full of mischief, a mouth with a humorous twist to it and a mind that plays hither and thither like the lightning.

Further summing up by an old student of the American scene: (a) that this nation is in three parts, one-third anti-

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British, one-third pro-British, one-third neutral; (b) that this is a much more foreign country for the Englishman than is, say, Greece or France.

A funny story is being told of an American soldier in England who is of Italian origin. He found himself near Italian prisoners of war, and talked to them through the barbed wire. After a while he ran back to his sergeant shouting excitedly: "Say, sergeant, these fellas are O.K.—absolootly O.K." The sergeant asked him what he meant. "Why," said the private, "what I mean is they're O.K., quite O.K.—they hate the English just as much as we do." The second tale is of the American soldier who was being interviewed in front of the microphone by a B.B.C. man. He replied in monosyllables. Then he was asked what he thought of the English. He pondered that a long time. Finally he said: "Well, I'll say they don't give us no trouble!"

April 10th, 1944.

This is Easter Monday in New York. When I lifted the telephone this morning to inquire the temperature outside, the reply was: "Fifty-eight." Less than a week ago we had snows and a blizzard. There's moisture in the air, and I could think the sea is round the corner. This laid-on information about temperatures is one of the amusing items in American life. I begin to understand more and more why folk love America. I have spent the past week here and discovered every day some fresh delight. I see grids steaming in the streets, and wonder why. "Oh," I'm told, "you can have central heating supplied like gas or electricity. That's what it is." Each morning the grass is greener. Yesterday the lake in Central Park held a kind of regatta of tubby little boats barging about like a crowded Serpentine. Reminded me somehow of *Kipps*. Indeed, there's a great Englishness about parts of American life, especially on this East Coast. On Saturday I saw Clarence Day's play, *Life with Father*. Father is an irascible red-headed old gentleman who could be nothing but Anglo-Saxon in origin. He lets his eldest son into secrets about women—but after warning him how women will work every problem round into a touchstone question of whether you still love them, he stops short. His son stammers out: "But what—what—what *about women?*" To which the old gentleman responds: "There are questions which gentlemen do not discuss." Delicious. That this Dickensian play has now run for five years is testimony to

American good taste and love of fun—I had almost written good, clean fun, for there's nothing nasty in this play. I'm told I must listen to the Aldridge family on the radio, that the Aldridges, so to speak, bind Americans together, for the Aldridges are you and me and all the comedy and tragedy that lies in ordinary life.

The generosity of Americans keeps cropping out like a vein of precious metal. A woman friend has her dentition and that of her family done for next to nothing. She came from England with her two young children when England was enduring the Blitz. An American dentist, hearing of them, inquired: "Who is doing their dentistry? For I should like to do it." He did 500 dollars' worth of work, and refused any payment beyond 100 dollars. This is one of the facts that make difficult—or a little difficult—my thesis that we must be tougher with Americans. A lot of individual Americans have put individual British folk under an immense debt; for the British Treasury has refused to allow adequate dollars to be exported to maintain relatives in the United States. I dislike this situation profoundly.

*Life with Father* is but one of three plays I've lately seen. *Lovers and Friends*, with Katherine Cornell, and *The Cherry Orchard* were the others. *Lovers and Friends* is not a distinguished play. It is as though you dressed a beautiful woman in calico. *The Cherry Orchard* took me into a world of fantasy, yet a world wrought of the fundamentals of life—sorrow, stupidity, the uprise of energy and talent in peasant stock, inexorable change and the sadness implicit therein, starved spinsters, and women in love with cads, age that grows tiresome and lives lived too long, all this and much else—so that I felt I had banqueted at Wisdom's table and had my withers wrung at the same time.

For the first time I travelled on the New York underground, which, indeed, is barely underground at all—about one flight down. My car was half-full of Negroes. What superb faces for an artist to draw! Americans can get as much character into their caps as once men did into their whiskers. The fare is 5 cents. I get the impression that you can go to the world's end for 5 cents. (You can, too, if you have the right companion.) With this golden key of 5 cents, you can go to Staten Island across the river—a twenty-minute sail on the windswept river, with the green old Statue of Liberty looking *enceinte*, and a fleet of ships moored at anchor that have crossed the wide seas. No sort of ship can be a bad ship for me provided she behaves herself. And if your companion recounts to you in the Doric

how the visiting Lancashire workman recently here told them in an American factory, "We say where I come from that what's good enough for t'bosses is good enough for t'men"—why then, your joy is rounded off.

I've been admiring the dressing of shop windows—I recall one, a bundle of hay and a hat dropped among it and a stockinged leg amusingly cocked in the air. Another pleasantness: Is there any hour of the day and part of the night when it's impossible to sit at a drugstore counter and have bacon and eggs done to a turn in about two minutes with hot toast and steaming coffee. I doubt it. At eleven one morning I had a five-course breakfast for 85 cents in a drugstore new to me. About the same hour next day I went in again. The middle-aged waitress smiled. I said, musingly, "I think I'll have the same again." She bustled off. She remembered my order *in toto*; a little thing, but the kind that endears a country to you. I hope there'll be drugstores in Heaven—and in England after the war. I spent an hour in the planetarium among the stars—Beethoven and the moon coming up and stars unfolding as night's cloak is drawn across the dark-blue heavens. And this joy, too, that my bedroom has a window on Fifth Avenue—Fifth Avenue at night straight as a sword twenty stories below me, and lit as though a string of stars and rubies had fallen there, air crisp and the night clear as even a sailor could wish.

*April 17th, 1944.*

American telephones are most excellent in both courtesy and speed. The other day I asked to be put on to a professor in a town 400 miles away. I didn't know his number. Within one minute he was on the line. The tracking down of an individual is part of the service, and finely it is done. But the postal letter service seems far below our own in swiftness and certainty. It has just taken a week for a small parcel to arrive fifty miles away—and there's no bombing to excuse it.

Some talk with Diarmuid Russell. Diarmuid believes one reason why Western folk have grown irreligious is that all the religions come from the East and require a good deal of meditation—which is something Western life does not readily encourage or provide for. We continued an old argument about men's ability to achieve great heights provided they try hard enough. My own view is that our brains vary a lot; I suspect Shakespeare and Albert Einstein got off to a flying start.

An American character was described to me, a man 6 feet 2 inches high, turned fifty; to-day he's an odd man about farms, but, in a sense, he's an American aristocrat, for his forbears came here in the sixteen hundreds and at one time farmed 3,000 acres. To-day, he recognises no man's right to order or control him. If deer are not to be shot in a certain month, then he'll certainly shoot them in that month, if no other. If there is a preserve, then he'll enter it. Yet he's a gentlemanly fellow, and you could have him to dinner and he'd behave with dignity. Like most of us, he has a weakness—his is liquor. In the old days strong cider was brewed. In the bitter weather the barrel froze—all but the centre, where gathered liquid almost pure alcohol. This precious fluid was tapped—and after two or three tots of it you were raging drunk. How far that pure alcohol was associated with the loss of 3,000 acres is a subject for conjecture. Well, there he is, of ancient lineage, highly skilled with his hands, for he's ploughman, blacksmith, motor-mechanic and Lord knows what. Thrown on a desert island, he'd be the Admirable Crichton with a vengeance; you and I would be left standing. Yet he makes 6 dollars a day, and a radio commentator in the top flight makes 600. Some disbalance there, I trow.

*April 19th, 1944.*

Spring is late, but none the less begins to manifest itself. Last evening about seven o'clock as we drove from Katona through the wood the westering sun poured through the trees, touching with radiance the first bright red buds, so that it was as though a dim, fiery tint enshrouded the whole; even palings and tree trunks took on pastel shades of rose and heliotrope.

When I spoke of woodland beauties, my hostess mentioned sadly the lack of scent in so many of the flowers, as though, in striving after other qualities, the smell had been bred out of them. She is an American, and she spoke with longing of the scent of English violets and English hay, attributing the difference to the English moisture in air and grasses.

There are parts of U.S.A. where spring is very brief—where, within a few days, summer has leapt over the back of winter.

To-day I visited the *Readers' Digest* headquarters at Pleasantville, thirty-eight miles from New York, where I lunched with Mr. Kenneth Payne, second-in-command, and some of their editors. A good many hundreds work there in quietness and composure—so much quiet, indeed, that as I sat in a reception

room I could have believed I was in a hospital or a Harley Street doctor's house. Copies of the journal in Spanish and Swedish lay on side tables. The success of this magazine is equivalent to that of Ford in another field; it sells some eight million copies in America and two further millions overseas. A success of this kind can be intimidating, and I asked these editors if they were not overwhelmed by the responsibility resting on them. One of them—not Mr. Payne—said with a smile: "I always think of us as in the entertainment business." I replied, also with a smile, that the last article I wrote before leaving England was one saying that no newspaper should be permitted to sell more than a million copies, so that the *Readers' Digest* circulation was not my cup of tea. This was said as banter, but none the less I regard the potentialities of the *Digest*—as, indeed, of any paper of that circulation—as rather disturbing. The *Digest* has been a target for criticism of late on the ground that it is ultra-Conservative, is wedded to the Republican machine, and is anti-administration, and that it was faintly anti-this-war in the beginning. (But so were many good Americans.) I am not deep enough a student of the *Digest* to know how sound those criticisms are, but they are made by men or by journals I respect. On the other hand, it is certain the *Digest* has published articles that were admirably fair to Britain, notably a recent one on Palestine. It may be that the *Digest* grows apprehensive of criticism; at all events, some of my questions went unanswered. But they were good enough to tell me that an edition in French would be published after the war. (The *Digest* is printed in six languages at the moment.)

Mr. Payne wanted to know why Britain has been so tender with Eire, which gave me an opportunity to reply that we are blamed for being tender with Eire and not tender enough with India, for being too dominating over the Muslims of India, but not dominant enough with the Muslims of Palestine. In fact (I said), Eire is entitled under the Statute of Westminster to be in or out of this war, just as she pleases—although I personally think she ought to be in.

We had some lively talk over anti-British feeling in U.S.A., and when one editor said Good-bye to me, he added mischievously and humorously: "I am just going to do another anti-British piece—on Saudi Arabia." I said: "Sir, I am getting inured to them." They roared with laughter when I repeated to them the joke I read two nights ago in the *New York Post*—that when an English soldier was asked by an American soldier what was wrong with the Americans in Britain, the soldier re-

plied: "Well, you're over-dressed, you're over-paid, you're over-sexed—and you're over here!"

An editor, whom I much liked, said there's a pretty wide-spread view in American circles claiming to be informed that Britain is inclined to by-pass China in the Far East on the ground that she is no military power, but that America, being more sentimental, is intent on sticking to China. I said that the average Englishman (if it be conceded there is one) is as sentimental about China as are Americans, and would equally disapprove any by-passing.

The founder of the *Digest* was Mr. De Witt Wallace, who still controls it. As a soldier in the last war, it is said that he found that most magazines had one outstanding piece, and it occurred to him that if you chose all those and bound them together, you'd have a most excellent journal. So, after the war, he and his wife set to work with this modest idea, and circulated the result among their friends. To-day he pays his chief editor in salary and bonus about 100,000 dollars a year. His own income must be fabulous.

An informant who is not in any way associated with the *Digest* said to me: "They have no children. He has always struck me as not really wanting this enormous success, and not quite understanding how it has happened."

Is Mr. Wallace troubled in mind, I wonder, as to what will happen to his *Digest* when he dies? Suppose the journal fell into the hands of a Fascist or Communist? The remedy and safeguard would seem to be to make the *Digest* into a public trust on the lines of *The Times* of London.

*April 21st, 1944.*

The *Boston Globe* to-day has a large advertisement headed: "Smash Anti-Semitism." Some 3,879 Christian ministers throughout America are behind this campaign. They assert in this advertisement: "When the Jews are attacked, we are under attack. . . . The anti-Semitic forces which were frustrated and . . . beaten back into their lairs now come forth using the technique . . . of pamphlets, leaflets and circulars . . . organised mailing. . . ." The clergymen urge co-operation with police and all State authorities in "putting a stop to the present brazen Fascist anti-Semitic propaganda." Under a heading "The Pledge," is written: "Jesus was not murdered by the Jewish people, who followed Him in their multitudes and heard Him gladly, but by their enemies, the Quislings of that day hiding behind a synthetic 'Jewish Front' mob, just as

to-day His spirit is being murdered again all over the Western world by similar betrayers using synthetic 'Christian Front' mobs."

U.S. War Secretary Stimson, Navy Secretary Frank Knox and Maritime Chairman Emory Land to-day warn America that it faces a man-power crisis which may imperil the mightiest military undertaking in history, and they add: "False public interpretations of what are only local victories on the perimeter of the enemies' strongholds may indeed imperil victory when we thrust at the foes' heart." Nobody speaks so bluntly as the American leaders. But it doesn't appear to have much effect.

*April 27th, 1944.*

Last evening in Boston I attended a dinner of the Nieman Fellows (journalists spending a year at Harvard) in a small room at Joseph's Restaurant; very informal and friendly. Mr. Louis M. Lyons of the *Boston Globe* combines his newspaper writing with acting as Curator. About fifteen of us were there, men from Kansas City, Chicago, Louisville, Tennessee and other parts of the United States. I discussed with several journalists and with Professor Murdoch of Harvard a difficulty that confronts newspaper men—that of deciding whether they regard themselves as mere mouthpieces for their employer, as a barrister does in court, or whether they will write only that which they believe to be true and right and in line with their political convictions. Not every newspaper man, of course, is exercised in his mind on this score, for a host of them haven't got any political or sociological convictions—to them, one political party is as bad as another. The bulk of British journalists who have convictions are, I believe, on the Left, and the bulk of newspapers are on the Right, so that if every man stood on his beliefs a lot of journalists would have to find some other craft, and often a worse-paid craft. The Scripture says, "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?" but a wife (usually less troubled by political conscience than her husband) and one or two children can be powerful quieters of conscience. They shouldn't be, but they are. All the same, if this world is to be a better place, newspaper men will have to be less ready to be mouthpieces. The craft should be as holy as going into the Church. For myself, I like the *New Yorker*—cool, adult, thorough—best in the American field, though it runs to length. I've just been reading a piece of reportage on rats that runs to



6,000 words. I think 5,999 would have been just about enough—or 1,999. But it was thorough, all right. Nor is there anything in English journalism so good of their kind as the *New Yorker's* profiles. I am amused and ashamed that so many ideas trotted out by British papers are really American. When are we going to have magazines as efficient as *Time*, *Fortune* and the *Atlantic Monthly*?

When I heard the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Koussevitsky play Beethoven's Fifth and Brahms' Fourth Symphonies I met a soldier who said he had come 3,000 miles from Nebraska to hear it, to which, not to be outdone, I replied I had come 2,000 the other way. If the gods have food, it surely must be music. Certainly, on the day or days when Beethoven wrote his *andante* movement in the Fifth Symphony he must have felt he was doing the Almighty's work. This is the glory of creation, to prove the immortality that rests in these bones and flesh and nerves.

Remark by a distinguished man of his wife, who appeared to have an ironclad composure: "On the contrary, she is, in fact, like the Lord. She needs praising every day."

There's the other trait in human beings, an ultra-caution, a recoil from any final commitment—as expressed in the charwoman who, whenever her mistress said to her cheerfully, "See you again to-morrow," would reply: "Yes—all being well." All being well. That took care of every caprice of the Almighty; it placated Him.

The professor of a college at which I spoke a few weeks ago writes: "I felt certain the result would be a better appreciation and understanding. On the whole that was the result, but I was very much surprised in their later discussion of India. The assertion that the average Englishman is bored with the Indian problem and that Britain is in a position where she simply cannot let go suddenly is described as 'cyewash.' One explanation for this point of view of the students is the scepticism which is a part of their education, and it is part of their mood to cock the eyebrow and recite Shaw's lines from the *Man of Destiny*. But I also think that there is, in the back of their minds, the idea that British policy in India is purely negative, and that even if gradual withdrawal is the policy, there should be

definable and positive elements in that policy. The goals should be stated and evidence of achievement offered."

I agree with that latter conclusion. As to the scepticism, before this war is over, some of those young sceptics may be dead. Why should they not have their grave doubts of what we older folk say? A young American friend tells me she finds no desire among the young college men she knows to be drafted; all say they would dodge it if they could. I dare say some speak cynically when they don't feel cynical, but one part of me finds it hard to blame them, anyhow. They, at all events, have no responsibility for events which led to this war. Some of our older consciences would be easier if we were going on raids to Germany twice a week, sharing the young folks' peril.

I see that Mr. Henry Wallace, Vice-President, says: "If we define an American Fascist as one who in case of conflict puts money and power ahead of human beings, then there are undoubtedly several million Fascists in the United States." And, one may add, not only in U.S.A.

The Catholic paper, the *Tablet*, published in Brooklyn, prints an evaluation of current plays made by the Catholic Theatre Movement. Of twenty-eight plays three are condemned—namely, *Early to Bed*, van Druten's *Voice of the Turtle* and the *Wallflower*. Among those fifteen held to be objectionable in part are Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Two Mrs. Carrrolls*, *Winged Victory*, Dodie Smith's *Lovers and Friends* and the Ziegfeld Follies. Only two are rated Class A1 for general patronage—namely: *Ramshackle Inn* and *Stars on Ice*. Eight others are O.K. for adults, *Othello* among them. I wonder if they strained to get *Othello* in? With Hitler burning books on the one hand and Catholics banning them on the other, liberty—or what's left of it—had best look out!

May, 1944.

Strange coincidence! I find myself in the ship, of all ships in the world, in which I sailed to South Africa nearly three years ago. This time we have several thousand U.S. troops on board. We've been three days at sea; three restful days, much sleep, a quiet sea, and a sea with plenty to gaze upon—namely a host of splendid ships, for we are in convoy. Nobody can communicate with me. How excellent that is: to be cut off and lead a monastic life. What tales abound! Two of my cabin companions are Colonial Service men from West Africa. He who

sleeps beneath me, a grey-haired man who hasn't seen a spring in England since before the last war and who laments a trifle that this spring will be largely over when we land, said this afternoon: "Do you know what my last job was? Investigating a human sacrifice. An old chief died, and a sub-chief strangely disappeared. The body vanished. Probably a dozen others disappeared, too—one or two wives, and others less important. It is the tribal custom that the chief must be accompanied to the next world by enough followers to look after him. And these are people we're preparing to give self-government to! No matter how distinguished some of them become—one may have an Oxford or Cambridge degree, or be a doctor or lawyer—but on occasion he'll don his native dress and go consult the fetish doctor." I asked him how he thought the sub-chief was disposed of. He said: "The old chief's two sons, when the sub-chief was drunk—of course, they all get drunk on these occasions—probably carried him off, cut his throat ceremoniously, and then dismembered him. His heart and lights would be taken away and buried with the old chief." He told me this, too, that the natives when doing strenuous work or a long march will chew cola nut all day, a very bitter nut with stimulus in it. "If a native girl gives you a cola nut, it means she has designs on you."

It's rare in my experience to find those who've had first-hand dealings with coloured folk who are believers in equality. An American State Attorney from the Middle West is in this vessel. He said yesterday: "*Any Nigger, any Nigger*, whether he's university educated or what he is, will lie or thief under sufficient pressure. They never change underneath." Again, he said: "I've sometimes sent for a Nigger who, I could see, was going wrong, making a nuisance of himself, and said to him: 'Look here! If you don't watch yourself, change your ways, you're going to get killed. And if you do, I'm not going to do too much about it—it'll be your own fault.' Sure enough, six, twelve, eighteen months later word comes to me—that fellow's been carved up. Sure, they're great on carving one another up. Yet they're mighty frightened of the surgeon's knife. Many a Nigger dies on the surgeon's table from nothing but fright. A famous surgeon said to me not long since: 'There was no reason at all why that Nigger should have died. Just fright, that's all.'"

An American colonel said he couldn't understand how it happened that some of our English girls went with Negroes in England, and had children by them. I said: "Every country

has a certain number of women of that sort. The mistake, I think, lay in your sending the Negroes over without sending Negro women also. I always thought it unwise, for what's happened doesn't improve our good relations."

Two American officers, when speaking to me of the Germans, called them "the Dutchmen." I inquired how they came to do it. They said: "Oh, we always call them that."

"Then what do you call the Hollanders?"

"Oh, Hollanders or Holland Dutchmen."

An English trade union official returning on this ship from the United States estimates the expenses granted to John L. Lewis by the Mineworkers' Union at over 100,000 dollars a year, and the expenses of the Teamsters' Union Secretary at a similar sum. The figure seems fabulous, but it had been already given to me in Detroit and Chicago. The Englishman added this picturesque note: "In about 1926 the secretary of the Chicago Cinema Operators' Union came to the Trades Union Congress at Nottingham. But no Nottingham hotel was good enough for him. He took a suite at the Savoy Hotel, London, and flew by air morning and night from London to Nottingham. In his London suite he had a wardrobe stacked with liquor of every kind. In those days the wage of cinema operators in Chicago was about 75 dollars a week. Their opposite numbers in England drew about 35s. or 40s."

He's been deeply impressed—as any visitor must be—by the extravagant nature of much American life; speaks of visiting textile mills in Carolina where the mill-owners own entire villages—the houses, shops, schools and even churches. In one family he visited he found the employer and his four sons are under-sheriffs possessing sub-machine-guns or revolvers. I asked for what purpose they had the guns. He said, with an expansive humorous smile: "Why, to shoot trade unionists. There isn't a trade unionist in the factory." He has caught glimpses of an America that obviously strikes him as a page from *The Arabian Nights*, such food and drink as he never dreamt of, and machines doing the work of twenty British operatives. More soberly he looks on the United States as having progressed as far in machinery improvements during this war as she would normally have done in twenty-five years; quotes American trade union leaders as being afraid of their having sixteen millions unemployed after the war unless—unless America goes vigorously into the field of international trade. "They see themselves as

the world's provider, the world's mass-producer. They say: 'Why should a little country like England have all this foreign trade? We can beat you at it.' But when I say to them: 'But who's going to buy your stuff if you keep your high tariff walls? Nobody will be able to pay you'—well, they've no answer to that."

I said: "Some way will have to be found, however. The world will be starving for food and for goods of all kinds. America has raised her productive capacity in manufactures two or three times. Is man's wit so small that he can't harness one to the other?" But the harnessing, one must confess, has never been achieved hitherto. He said: "The first six months post-war are the crucial time for America—the crucial days with danger of inflation, unemployment, quarrels between capital and labour, and Negro troubles. If they get through that—full steam ahead."

This vessel holds many nations. An American major who will command a ship's boat in emergency tells me this one boat will contain sixteen nationalities, all Americans. 'The English are here, the Scots, Irish, Australians and the rest. The difference in warmth and friendliness between the Americans and English is noticeable—and not to our advantage. We've a red-tabbed colonel who walks about as though he had lost a shilling and found sixpence; doesn't look as if he has smiled for years. English folk can pass one another on the deck, morning, noon and night, as if they each walked alone. I am often as bad as the rest. I suspect this coolness and aloofness has done us damage the world over. But, on the other hand, the American military policemen swinging their thick staves can be very officious. Perhaps they have to be, their troops being so diverse, but . . . I ran into an English captain admonishing one. "Pay more attention to rank," he said. "Understand?" The American policeman made no response. The captain shouted it, adding: "Get me?" and again, "Get me?" Finally a slow "Yes, sir." "Good show," said the captain.

It is some days since I made the last notes. We have two meals a day; I breakfast at 7.30 and dine at 6 p.m.—nothing in between. No, that's wrong, for I am become like a squirrel hoarding his nuts. I save the apple or orange from dinner and add to it three rolls I turn into sandwiches at breakfast. Thus, my lunch. We are served with as much food in two meals as

we normally draw in three. Dinner to-night was soup, fish, two meat courses, a sweet, dessert and cheese. For breakfast—stewed fruit, cereal, fish, bacon and potatoes, marmalade, rolls, coffee. I don't know if anybody eats the lot. I never do. The Americans must find the flavour and quality tough after what they've had hitherto. They're being broken in to English fare. So are we. It runs English train food very close—the sort of food from which some secret and mysterious factory has extracted all the flavour.

These American lads are very likeable. I talked to two yesterday who are seeing the sea and ships for the first time in their lives. One is a sergeant in their railway corps—comes from Birmingham, near New Orleans. He said: "I wanted to join the Navy. Gee! glad I didn't." For the wind was getting up and the ship rolling a bit. But we've been lucky with weather. For the first time the waves are white-capped. We're rolling as I write; the ship writhes and creaks as though a multitude of canes were being bent to and fro. But only a few have been ill. I came on an American soldier hanging over the rail. "How are you doing?" I asked.

"I been mighty sick."

"Was that to-day or yesterday?"

"Mighty sick all the time."

"Come from the Middle West?"

"Yup." But I doubt if he did. I guess he was so disturbed he'd have said "Yup" to anything. A lot of these lads are adventuring into a strange world—ships, sea, B.B.C. voices, B.B.C. humour—and war waiting beyond. Two young ones talked to me. One said: "Yes, guess we're both married. I've got a kid, and his should have been born yesterday. Guess he's sitting on the hot seat." We were watching their comrades playing crap dice. Two dice are hurled against a piece of ship's upright and they bet on what turns up. Considerable sums are changing hands. One lad said: "I saw a pal take 130 dollars in one roll." They sit or stand around with rolls of dollar bills in their hands. "Reckon it's the same money all the time—they'll have to be pasting the pieces together before we get ashore." A colonel of Ordnance said to me: "My headquarters staff—ten of 'em—have won 1,400 dollars so far. I've got 320 dollars here"—he tapped his blouse—"from one chap and 100 from another. One of 'em won 500 dollars and put that away. Next day he lost 300, and to-day he's won 310. They certainly handle some money, these kids." They've got a sweet tooth. One comes on a chap weighing fourteen stones sitting on

the deck chewing a thick piece of chocolate candy. They "pass up" a lot of the English food.

I spoke of American diversity. The variety of English experience in this ship is equally amazing. We've got a few hundred of our own soldiers aboard going home for the first time in seven and eight years; Lincolns and Warwicks and some of the Gloucesters who fought their way up the Promé road with General Alexander the day after I had driven up that same road. These men were in Rangoon when I was. We've got a naval lieutenant-commander, who was in Akyab soon afterwards with a handful of little river boats when Akyab's defence against the 120 Japanese bombers which came over was four 3·7 guns worked by Territorials. Slight as that defence was, before long two of those guns were taken for the defence of Calcutta. We've got a crowd of Australian Air Force sergeants who sailed across the Pacific in the hold of a Liberty ship and are quartered in the after-hold of this one. Some of them are a trifle browned off over that. One lad has slept two nights on deck to dodge the heat below. (But I've seen the quarters. Rankers in the last war would have counted them luxurious. To-day the sergeants have had an issue of oranges.) We've got an Englishman from Nigeria who spent 320 dollars in New York in two weeks. I've found a man who was a soldier along with me in 1914 and was wounded at Le Transloy not far from me in 1916. We've got 150 Merchant Navy men going home who must have their three meals a day, although the rest of us get two. We've a purser who served five years in the Marines as an officer during World War I, and we've got a ship's captain who thinks the American sentries are more intelligent than our own soldiers, with none of their defensiveness when you ask them who they are and whence they come. He speaks highly, too, of the experimentalism of the Americans in running these convoys—they do things we British would never have done, and it works; you can telephone the Commodore from this ship as easily as though you telephoned next door.

Sitting on a steel box of ammunition, I talked with an officer from Jones County, in the Mississippi Valley. Jones County, he said, is a mighty independent place; when the South seceded from the Union, Jones County didn't secede—didn't agree with it. Jones County had two lynchings last year—one Negro had raped a child and another had murdered the farmer he worked for (he said). So the two Negroes were taken from the gaol and lynched. Nothing was done about it by Jones County because

the sheriff and the gaoler said they couldn't recognise who the men were who robbed them of their keys and unloosed the doors. And sure, the state did nothing, because it was a job for the county. But, later on, some ladies in New York who had too much money and didn't know what to do with it—they started a row and got the Federal Government on to it; and the Federal Government just had to send down an investigating party. And after an inquiry, five men were arrested, charged with the lynching. But Jones County didn't like this—didn't approve at all. Here was the Federal Government butting into something that wasn't its concern. It was the Civil War over again, but fought in a court instead of on a battlefield. So about twelve of the best lawyers volunteered to defend the men, and a subscription was raised to find a defence fund, and every man on the jury was a fellow who was not only born in the county, but his father was born there and his grandfather before him. No nonsense about having men who didn't understand this Negro problem and how it should be handled. So the trial began. And first it was proved that Number One accused was ten miles away on the day of the lynching, and Number Two was fifteen miles away on that selfsame day. And so it went—and in due time all the five men were released with the charge not proven. I said: "Do you think they were guilty?" He said he didn't know, but he guessed if they weren't they knew who did it. I said: "If they had been guilty, would the result have been the same?" He said: "Yes. Sure it would." And there you have a sidelight on the American Negro problem.

An American colonel tells me: "There's only one answer in the U.S. Army. It's: 'Yes, sir.'"

The truth about the sea and convoys is hard to reach. A few days ago we had a submarine alarm, and the gunners went to action stations. No shot was fired, no depth charges dropped. Maybe it was but a hulk or a whale or school of fish that gave back the echo. But there is this astonishing fact—this was the first submarine alarm this ship has had for two years! This is an American convoy. The Commodore has quarters on the U.S. cruiser. Our British Commodores are wont to send amusing or sarcastic messages to ships sometimes. Not so the Americans; every message is strictly matter-of-fact; no nonsense. Perhaps no humour—or none for war? Some of our merchant scamen prefer the American method.

We are over halfway across. To-day the sea is like glass that



tilts a trifle this way or that. The water looks oily and, indeed, oil and wreckage floated past to-day. But the vast oily surface I mean is merely a sea unbroken by waves; somewhat sinister in its look. At 10.30 last night a queer manifestation. On the far horizon to starboard stood a molten red mass shaped like a ship; silent, unmoving. An Australian flying officer said it was the moon rising. I think not. Presently a red globular mass detached itself and stood to the north-west, poised itself for a minute, and went out. Slowly the other red mass went out, too, like a candle. No explanation.

Earlier in the evening the Americans had given us a concert. All the performers were what the Americans call "enlisted men"—no officers among them. A jazz band (indifferent),—a guitarist who vamped to miscellaneous songs, picking his way over his strings,—a quartette of comedians with engaging amenable canvas caps able to express various emotions,—and much crooning. The compère crooned a song about cleaning a latrine till it shone with a sheen. Another private imitated Mr. Roosevelt saying that no American soldier would be sent overseas, and adding: "My friend Mr. Churchill will run the war for me." Um! These American lads were finely natural—no shyness, nervousness or self-consciousness.

Small sidelights on war—even the last war—can be fascinating. One who was a major in Salonica in the last war tells me they used half their bacon ration for making a fire with which to cook the other half; not a tree or lump of wood in the landscape. So cold was the winter wind that even mules died unless you dug them into the hillside.

A Britisher with an Oxford degree, very able, working on the Gold Coast, has recently married a black girl. When the Governor, previous to his wedding, remonstrated with him, he replied: "Thank you for giving me your point of view. I am marrying her next week."

An American Taxpayers' Association is striving to limit the Federal Government's powers of taxation to 25 per cent. of incomes and inheritances. Fourteen States have passed resolutions approving. A section of Americans are like caged animals striking at the bars, the bars being war. They bitterly resent the war, and are irked by all to do with it. Conversely, I've been reading a booklet given to U.S. troops going to Britain. This is

most admirably fair to us—points out we had a million dead in the last war and that the Americans lost only 60,000 in action; says the Americans don't know what taxation is compared with us; and that any large American city has more murders, burglaries and robberies in one year than the whole of Britain. (Actually, America had 130,000 killed, missing and prisoners in the last war.)

One of England's most famous landlords and of most ancient lineage said not long ago to a trade union leader I know: "I've come to the conclusion that it's all wrong for my family to own all this land for which these lads are fighting and dying." If this man would say that in public it would create a sensation. Why doesn't he? He's an old man, rich, noble in rank. But what's important is that maybe it foreshadows immense changes. My trade union friend has been telling a major of cavalry absent from England for seven years (during which he hasn't heard any shots fired) that he will find that great changes have been wrought—and that more are to come. Let's hope so.

I've finished the novel, *A Tree grows in Brooklyn*—a good book tingling with life and living people, touching, comic, sexy, overflowing with richness. A lot of its author's life there, unless I'm woefully wrong.

I sat at boat-drill this morning talking with a young woman about the vested interests in war. We noted the old dugouts who don uniforms emblazoned with ribbons (and often begin to draw good salaries once more); the men who escape honourably from marriages that had grown intolerable; the young women who take lovers, excusing themselves that the young men may soon be slain; the rogues who profit in the Black Market; the munitions workers who earn wages higher than normal; the youngsters who gallivant round the world at Government expense (we've got some aboard coming home from India via Australia and the Pacific).

An old sea captain voyaging on this ship—born north of the Trent, and a character—tells me that sea sickness is a question of balance. It is the task of a nerve in the brain to act as a gyroscope and restore balance to what the ship disbalances. With most folk, this comes about in a few days; in some, never. The latter are always sick. The former—the large majority—have a nerve which does its gyroscopic job and sickness is ended. We aboard

this ship have had two rolling days with a heavy swell and high wind. Few have been sick, yet had this sea been encountered during the first two days I, for one, would have been ill. As it is, I'm as lively as a cricket.

I said the voyaging captain was a character. He would, like me, abolish hereditary titles. He thinks Winston will have to go after the war because Winston is much too much an old Tory, sunk in the past. My captain thinks that in 300 years governments will be ended—national governments, anyhow. The world will be One. I told him he was an optimist. But it's fine to meet middle-aged men like sea captains with minds of their own. Our Royalty, he thinks, are living in the time of William IV.

My trade union friend is sorely troubled over U.S.A.; thinks she is in for devilish internal rows after the war and, her power and influence being what they are, he has moments of fear that she will drag us all down with her.

Since I wrote last, we've had a touch of excitement. Boat stations mid-afternoon, some depth-charging by a sloop a mile distant and much cavorting to and fro by escort ships. One looks at the mighty ships scattered on this sea, ships that plod on steady as old plough-horses, and it's very hard to think we're in any danger. Our dinner was put off for an hour and a half. Most of this time we were kept below decks, and saw what little we saw through our porthole. After a while, even that was slammed down from the outer deck. We were to know nothing and see nothing. High authority tells me that somebody mistook a shoal of fish for a torpedo track. It's as good a tale as any other.

African lore: African tribes are beautifully at variance in their attitude towards the mothers of twins. In some tribes the mother is counted blessed; as she walks abroad carrying her two babies, one on her back the other on her breast, everybody she meets must present her with a gift. In other tribes, she is thought to have had intercourse with the devil, and is driven into the forest and abandoned. The African cook of one of my companions, after a life in which he begot innumerable children by women he wasn't married to, took two wives ten years ago—he was well over forty—and has now had twelve children by them, including three sets of twins. His two wives live amicably together; when one is absent the other looks after all twelve children. My friend remarked to his cook on his large family.

The cook said: "This is nothing. My father had over seventy children." Yet it is rare for African women to have more than three. One might assume that child-bearing for them would be easy. It is not. They are made very small.

I have been reading Somerset Maugham's latest book, *The Razor's Edge*. This is a tale of a young American searching for the meaning of life and finding it, or such part as he does find, among the Yogi of India. But the mystery that is in life is in this tale too, and does not emerge. What he learns is most beautifully vague, except that he engages in some renunciation. The book is heavily sexed, and I wonder if this is specially done to suit America? One character, a woman nymphomaniac, goes to bed with men of all colours. America's reputation will soon rival that of Paris or Bucharest.

I read the opinion that self-sacrifice is a passion beside which even hunger and lust are trifling. On rare occasions, maybe. But I observe a host of Black Marketeers and business men who thrive on this war, and whose instincts of self-sacrifice are nil. What is even stranger than self-sacrifice is that many folk have an impulse towards self-destruction.

A senior mercantile officer puts the prosperous life of ships like this in the post-war world at ten years beyond peace. After that—finish.

By then, air travel will be, in his view, so cheap and swift that ships won't stand a chance: they'll be relegated to carrying merchandise. He is pessimistic on the score of poor education and poor physique among the English. I think he's right on that. The teeth of the Americans on this ship are magnificent; our own, pretty poor. The Americans are bulky and heavy; some of our lads are half the size. But if you turn to spirit and physical courage in fighting this war, I believe our lads can give them a start. An American military policeman said to me this morning as we stood watching the sea hissing from the ship's side: "I guess the war could end any time—it's all a matter o' money." I replied that most of us in England are being ruined just about as fast as we can go. But he wasn't convinced. Maybe he remembers the Merchants of Death inquiry in U.S.A.

An American major tells me how he met his wife. It was in France during the last war. She was a French girl. The first

time he saw her, he patted her bottom with his riding crop, and she was furious. He knew no French nor she any American, but they got along: he'd arrange to be about when she went shopping, and many's the morning he has walked along, a yard of French bread under one arm and her on the other arm. When the war was over he took her to America, but after five months she was pining for France. "I think she'd have died if she couldn't have gone," he said. She returned to France, and after a long stay was content to cross the Atlantic once more. Gradually America has won her heart: she no longer has the least desire to see France. He has said to her recently: "After the war you must go to France for a while," but she answered, "No, no. I don't want ever to go back now."

This ship has a loud-speaker system. It must be the worst in the world. I told the ship's staff major this morning that I can never tell what it says, so metallic and distorted do words become. He said he can't tell half it says, either! It's ten years old, he added, though I think him wrong there. After his first voyage in her, he reported the loud-speaker as hopeless, and experts came aboard at New York and tried it. It worked perfectly (apparently, as a tooth stops aching at the dentist's). It has worked very imperfectly since! Anyhow, these loud-speakers are a nuisance. Ten, twenty, fifty times a day the voice begins: "Attention, please! (Pause.) Attention, please! (Pause.) Attention, all personnel! Private So-and-So report to the Orderly Room at once. Repeat, Private So-and-So, etc." I believe he's a thwarted radio commentator. I cannot believe it was wise, either, to send several thousand people below decks the other day when submarines were reported. Some soldiers were ordered to the hold of the ship, about as far from the boat-deck as they could be. Here lived the Australian sergeant-pilots. Had we been torpedoed and forced to abandon ship, orders were that only boats' crews and women and children were to be permitted to descend in the boats: the remainder of us were to jump into the sea and be picked up 60 yards from the ship's side. The truth is that no troopship can carry beyond a tithe of the boats required. However, the losses in troopships have, happily, been infinitely small.

An American colonel growled bitterly to me about that order to his troops to go below. He growled also about the food his men get. He added: "Some of the English cooks or stewards have been selling ham sandwiches to my men at very high prices and also bottles of whisky as high as 25 dollars each."

(This is five to six times the proper price.) I replied that this was an American convoy under American control, and maybe the order to go below was American; that it was damnable, if true, about the ham sandwiches; as for the whisky, they were foolish to pay the money.

I asked a mercantile officer if he liked his job. He said: "No. You can't take a drink, and you need to be a eunuch."

I sat on a sea-chest talking to a young American officer from Mississippi. He's twenty-one; was married in March to a girl of eighteen; lived with her for eighteen days, and now . . . war in Europe for him. You don't have to go far or delve deep to find the tragedy of war. The American nation is not suffering in this war as our nation is: but the individual American can suffer just as much. If a man is dead, he's dead, whether he's member of an army of a thousand or a thousand thousand.

A sea officer travelling in this ship said to me: "Shipowners are the worst employers in the world. In our company the only time you see the chairman of directors is when you are going to be sacked. If a summons comes to see him, you go with your resignation in your pocket."

It occurs to me that some of the highly civilised—those at the top of the social scale plus the artists—and some of the uncivilised, are sound on sex; and that most of those in between are priggish or hypocritical to the degree that breeds infinite suffering.

I am amused at the fretfulness of my acquaintances on this ship at our slow passage. You'd think Paradise was awaiting them in England. I strive with more or less success to take things as they come. Here I am, something of a prisoner under delightful conditions, and there's nothing I can do to expedite movement. I know that in a few weeks' time I shall look back with deep pleasure on this sea travel.

It was evening before we tied up at the quay. A dozen times the raucous loud-speaker had ordered personnel to return the red lights we had worn on our lifejackets. Maybe some folk saw in them good illumination in the black-out. (When these lights were first issued to the troops early in the voyage, we civilians were ignored. After waiting two days, I suggested to

the admirable purser that there was no reason why we should be drowned with more expedition than other folk. He picked up his telephone, and within half an hour we all had them.)

Before tying up, we had lain out in the river and boatloads of sightseers or journeyers by ferry had sailed close by to greet the American soldiers. One girl pulled up her skirts to show her fine legs. Yells of delight and a shout: "Man overboard!" The Americans looked at the waterfront, and one or two murmured: "It's beautiful"—but, indeed, it wasn't. We ordinary folk went to bed till morning, but throughout the night the Americans disembarked—their nurses at 1.30 a.m. Close on midnight the enlisted men stood in the ship's corridors loaded like mules, waiting their turn to set foot on England, and growling as private soldiers the world over growl. I heard one or two using the word that Mr. Atkins has made peculiarly his own.

What a contrast is this England, with its Customs men and its examiners of our documents, to the spit and polish of America. England seems gentle and a trifle amateurish by comparison. But how much better, in some ways, I like it! I find, as I have always found, our Customs men exceedingly reasonable and good-tempered. One or two articles I expect to pay duty on, I do not pay on. Taxis are not to be had: our baggage goes on a motor-lorry, and the driver, whose clothes are fit for a scarecrow, makes room for me in front alongside him. The old engine will hardly tiek over. We grind slowly along. He says: "Me valves is gone. Can't get no spare parts." We crawl through the cobbled streets. "Only working on three cylinders," he says. "We got six." But he's good-tempered over it. A swagger American lorry, mighty and new, shoots past filled with American soldiers, who smile at us. Our engine-bonnet quivers and wobbles as though it will fall off. I confess to being a trifle irked that we in our own country should be so badly off and our Allies so beautifully equipped. However, it's their material, not ours.

*June 7th, 1944.*

We British and Americans ought to get on even better than we do. If misconceptions and most of the ignorance on both sides were swept away, not much cause for ill-will would remain. The American soldiers who stay in Britain or pass through will learn, I believe, that we are an honest people, pretty modest, with little hatred in us even for our enemies, and much warm-

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heartedness towards friends. We are a pugnacious people, but also a humorous people. We are a bit stiff at first, and some of our accents—for there are a vast number of them—must sound difficult, strange, and even unpleasant to American ears, as, perhaps, some of theirs do to us. But at bottom we have a great deal in common with Americans. It is unfortunate that peoples should so often be judged by the behaviour of their governments—and few governments succeed in displaying the more generous qualities of their peoples, their liberalism, and their warm humanity. It is equally unfortunate that, when not judged by their Governments, they are often judged from the conduct of a small minority who are usually far more wealthy than the bulk, far more arrogant or intolerant, and far less devoted to the welfare of the mass or, indeed, of the world at large. It is by these folk, I think, that we British have been so largely measured. And, of course, this is true of Americans also. The American who travels Europe in peacetime, often rich, sometimes loud-voiced and domineering, believing there's little money cannot buy and acting on that belief, is as far from being like the man behind the drugstore counter or the brakeman on the Pullman, as the Englishman who wears a monocle (and there aren't many of those left) is different from the Devon farmhand or the Yorkshire woollen operative. If Governments were worthy of the people they govern, wars would be fewer. If by some miracle we could make ordinary folk the world over the dominant forces, I don't think we should spend very much of our substance on armaments, because about 90 per cent. of mankind want to plough the soil or work at an anvil or go to baseball and football matches. And because of this wish to be left alone, they are never left alone. They ignore what the politicians and armament-makers and militarists are doing for so long that finally what is being done engulfs them. They wake up with the alarm clock going, and the house on fire. Every one of us is an isolationist to a greater or less degree. We all want to be insulated against the turmoil and horrid mess of the world. We are all escapists in some measure. America might be called, without undue exaggeration, a nation of such people. But America is wrong in thinking we British are fundamentally different. Most of us, also, would be glad to withdraw into a prosperous and lovely countryside or city. That is, if we could. I suspect that a lot of Americans feel in their bones that we British rather like a war, that we go into it with zest. I've said we are a pugnacious people; but we are also a pacifist people. We have certainly been so since the Great War, and we



probably were before. America's detestation of war is no deeper than ours. To put it no higher than self-preservation, this bleeding white of the best in our manhood is something we British cannot repeatedly endure, and survive.

Shortly before I sailed for England I addressed some remarks to the American people in which I recalled that I had not been in their country long before somebody spoke to me of those who are "home sick on both sides of the Atlantic," and I continued: "Alas! I am about to join their ranks. I return to London, but not all of me will return. For America has endeared itself to me." There are a score of reasons for that—quick, warm friendship, a variety of scene, climate and terrain that is superb, a zest for life and living, a democratic style that's typified by the drug-store at the street corner, but above all by the acceptance of people of almost every race without much stopping to think who they are. I have begun to feel that the United States, with all its imperfections, is mankind's most hopeful experiment up-to-date. The city of Chicago holds sixty-one nationalities, but the city works. A Kaiser shipyard or a Detroit munitions plant has, perhaps, as many; they are marvellously efficient. The melting down, the fusing, is being achieved. The brotherhood of mankind strides over the horizon.

But, I said, I am not writing to set down compliments, deeply sincere as they are. My view, as a result of this visit, is that we British would be getting along better with America and Americans were we franker and more outspoken, and, from time to time, critical. For, of course, Americans do not hesitate to be critical of us British, and especially of us English. (The Scots, the Welsh and the Irish are less often the targets.) No Englishman can go to the United States for the first time—as I have done—without being surprised. That surprise will often be linked with delight; it will sometimes be linked with despair: despair at the lack of understanding between us, despair at the deplorable ignorance of basic facts.

For this ignorance our respective Governments are partly responsible. When I came to America last December not one American in a hundred knew that the British casualties in the Tunisian campaign were nearly twice those of America—35,000 to 18,000; and I did not myself know that of the three divisions which landed at Salerno under General Mark Clark two were British and one was American. This last fact had been withheld from us. Conversely, very few English folk know

of the mighty and valiant part American ships have played in the Russian convoys to Murmansk and Archangel.

How easy it is for disunity among the United Nations to feed on such ignorance as I have noted in various parts of U.S.A. Those of us who write bear a heavy burden of responsibility, a responsibility equal, or nearly equal, to that of governments or politicians. For if we do not speak out, who will? It is not our job to be Yes-men to the Powers that Be. And again, if we do not interpret our peoples to one another, who will do that, either?

We in England have been kept, wittingly or unwittingly, very much in the dark about the United States. The average Englishman thinks Mr. Roosevelt is as popular in America as Mr. Churchill is in Britain, that the nation is as solidly behind him. The average Englishman hasn't the slightest notion that there are chains of newspapers in America which are no friends of Britain, and that anti-British feeling is a factor in American life that must be reckoned with.

This anti-British feeling makes it very difficult sometimes to inform the American people. I have in mind a Press conference on the Pacific coast whereat I gave the facts of our casualties and answered questions on India, among other subjects. Not a word appeared in several newspapers represented; apparently their proprietors didn't want their readers to know the facts. There is another difficulty—namely, that there is not complete equality as between our Government's Information Services in the United States and America's similar services in Britain. The American Office of War Information works in England without any kind of prohibition or inhibition. We do not seek to restrain them in the slightest degree, or to demand to know what they do, although, in fact, I believe they keep us well-informed, and our relations are of the most cordial kind. But in America, our British Information Services must send three copies of every document they issue to the United States Department of Justice, and those documents must be headed: "Issued by the B.I.S., an agency of the British Government." If a British subject speaks to a meeting of over twenty people, the United States Government demands to know about it, and to know what he says. A British speaker must be registered as a foreign agent under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, which was passed in the winter of 1941-2, before the United States was at war. Nominally, all persons engaged in propaganda or publicity are subject to scrutiny of the most severe kind. In fact, it is not quite so bad as that, because waivers are granted

to journalists working for newspapers on the ground (curiously enough) that they are "engaged in acts of commerce," and Attorney-General Biddle has granted other waivers also. But the powers are there. An Attorney-General who chose could virtually stifle our information work. When a distinguished American journalist wrote two or three articles on England for a London newspaper, he had to be registered as a foreign agent because he did so. Another minor point: British journalists do not ask questions at Mr. Roosevelt's or Mr. Cordell Hull's Press Conferences, but I am not aware that American newspaper men in London work under any such limitation. The Washington censorship, in my experience, is several times as long-winded as London's, and less reasonable. Inequalities of these sorts do not, in my view, help good relations, but the contrary.

Again, a dweller in London or Glasgow would open his eyes very wide if he read some of the editorials in the *Chicago Tribune* or the Hearst Press, or glanced at some of the full-page advertisements that have been appearing in New York newspapers denouncing the White Paper on Palestine. I've one in front of me now addressed to the British Government and crying: "Stand back from the door of salvation, lest in the eyes of mankind and history you make a sham and a mockery of the exalted purpose to which we are together pledged and for which our sons together fight and die on the field of battle. Open the Gates of Palestine. . . . Open the one near and practical sanctuary to the handful of bleeding refugees who clamour at its gates." No mention in this advertisement that Palestine's doors are not shut, and that there's no question of shutting them till a further 30,000 Jews have been admitted; no mention, either, that the doors of the United States are shut to Jews, or that this problem is one for the whole world to solve, and not Palestine alone, that we in Britain and you in America have an equal responsibility.

I am not opposed to criticism; I am in favour of it. But it should have facts for its foundation, and, between Allies, it had better be tempered and reasonable. I have no quarrel with Voltaire's dictum: "I disagree with every word you say, but I will fight to the death for your right to say it." Only, if there's to be criticism, it must, like Lend-Lease, be a two-way affair. Colonel Robert McCormick's paper described Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten not long ago as a "playboy." I wonder what the colonel would have said if an English newspaper had been severely critical of an American general or suggested such and such a one should be sacked, as one or two American

journals have done with regard to an English commander? I imagine the gallant colonel would have been excessively pained.

In moving about America I have devoted a little time to asking why those who are anti-British are anti-British. I think it well that we should know the facts; good relationships are not founded on legends, or rarely. If you build on shifting sands, your house may fall down. I've been given quite a variety of reasons why we are not liked better, thus—the English are high-hat and arrogant; Britain is going Red; Britain, on the other hand, is not a democracy, for she still has Royalty, and the Old School Tie weights the scale in favour of fools when appointments are made; Britain has the smartest diplomats and business men in the world and their subtlety and Machiavellian methods outwit Americans; Britain always fights her wars with other folks' blood and treasure; Britain draws great revenues from India, and, despite what she has said, has no intention of getting out of India; England governs Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, etc., the suggestion that they are independent is just baloney and, anyhow, what did Mr. Churchill mean by saying he hadn't gone into office to liquidate the British Empire?; the English have no sense of humour; the English accent is awful—nobody can tell what they say; the British didn't pay their war debts last time—they'll never be forgiven for that; for the second time, the British have dragged us into a war—they sold us a bill of goods last time, and they've done it again; the British have Mr. Roosevelt in their pocket, and now they are meddling in our Presidential Elections; Lord Keynes, the British economist, put over on Roosevelt a system of financing deficits which American bankers know is unsound, and which British bankers know is unsound, and with which the British Government would have nothing to do. And America suffers. Britain won't help us to fight Japan—as soon as the war in Europe is over, she'll pack up, and she'll be using the machinery America has given her under Lend-Lease to capture foreign markets while the United States is still fighting; why did Churchill say, "Give us the tools and we'll finish the job"? and why did Roosevelt say that not a single American soldier would be sent to fight on foreign soil? They knew that what they were saying wasn't true.

That is a somewhat formidable catalogue, but having, as I thought, finished, I remember that I have not mentioned the Jews, many of whom are busy attacking us on the subject of Palestine; and the Southern Irish, whose memories are not

short, and who can hate as powerfully as they can love. Nor have I noted the belief that it is the American soldier who will do most of the fighting on the Second Front.

A further complication exists—that precisely where anti-British feeling takes over from or is integrated into feelings that are anti-Negro, anti-Jew, anti-Communist, anti-Russian and anti-internationalist is extremely hard to say. And how far Axis agents are responsible, how far it is they who play on the quite normal hatred of Americans for war, and especially of American mothers for war, is even harder to judge. We all want peace at the earliest moment consistent with winning what we fight for, we all think war monstrous, we British (in my personal view) can endure the slaughter of our young manhood even less than America can, for we have fewer men, and we have endured the slaughter two years longer—our casualties in proportion to our population are many times America's. But we had better beware of the use the enemy makes of our loathing for war, our desire for peace, our anxiety to be just. A job left half done will have to be done again. Unless we convince Germany and Japan that war is a mistake and doesn't pay and had better not again be embarked on, we shall have failed.

At home, I continued, I call myself a Radical; I have never voted Conservative; I am one of those who occasionally remind Mr. Churchill—who commands my admiration and affection—that he is not God; it would not break my heart if the House of Lords were abolished—quite the contrary. May I then say a word in reply to some of the criticisms of us? I would not suggest that no English are high-hat, but what proportion are they? Did Shakespeare never make Americans laugh or Charles Dickens or Gracie Fields? Britain is not going Red. Britain is deeply conservative—with a small *c*. We are not, in my view, going violently in any direction, although I hope and believe we are going to have a goodly part of the Beveridge Report and a greater measure of social security for our workpeople than hitherto. We have Royalty, but we also have Labour Cabinet Ministers—Herbert Morrison, Ernest Bevin. We've had a Labour Government, and in due time we shall have another. We English don't think our business men and diplomats so smart. The business men don't keep slumps from putting millions out of work, and our diplomats haven't kept wars away. As for fighting wars with others' blood, the British Commonwealth had 1,089,919 dead and 2,400,988 wounded in the last war. America's

figures were 130,000 killed, missing and prisoners, and 234,000 wounded. We don't draw a ha'penny in taxes from India, and we shall depart from India as soon as this war is finished and Indians can agree among themselves on the constitution they want; we are pledged to do it. Mr. Churchill could hardly have said he had become Prime Minister to liquidate the British Empire. Why should he? Would Americans concede that without our Empire this war would have been lost? And would that have been a good thing? How could we take our leave of India while the war was on, and hand that continent over to the Japanese? Does anybody suggest that Russia or the United States should emerge weaker from this war? And if not, why should the British Commonwealth be weaker? Where does our sin lie? If we had gone down in 1940, when we stood alone against Hitler, would not most of the world have sunk into another Dark Age? Our accent may be annoying to American ears, but, after all, we are the original talkers of English. Would you tell a Frenchman that his French accent was offensive? Sure, we didn't pay all our war debts last time, but we paid them up to 1917, and Edward Stettinius points out in his recent book on Lend-Lease that we couldn't have paid the lot because America wouldn't accept payment in the only coin that we could use—namely, goods. Moreover, far more war debts were owing and unpaid to us than we failed to pay America. And—if I may be excessively blunt—would you, anyhow, pit your lost dollars against our English dead? For that was a war in which you finally decided it was right to fight—and you reached the starting line two years too late.

(I should point out here that our case doesn't fail to be put in America, and often by Americans. There are stalwart American newspapers and friendly journalists and radio commentators who keep true to Britain and speak up for us through bad days and good, among them those who from time to time suffer abuse, losses and setbacks through championing our cause.)

A charge frequently made in America against Englishmen is that we meddle in American affairs and more particularly in the Presidential Elections. The charge was made, and has recurred since—when the *Yorkshire Post* in January this year and the *Church of England Newspaper* a fortnight later spoke with approval of the possibility of Mr. Roosevelt running for a fourth term. I would say to you, my American reader, if you will allow me, that I imagine that the copies of these newspapers which

circulate in America could be counted on two hands. Mr. Anthony Eden was described in at least one United States paper as owning the *Yorkshire Post*. He doesn't own it, but he has connections by marriage with some of its largest shareholders. These two newspapers do not speak for Britain any more than the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* or the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* speak for America. There are several Church of England journals, and the *Yorkshire Post* is probably less influential than the *Manchester Guardian*. But why should we British be expected to be disinterested in who is to be your President? The peace of the world may, in part at least, turn on it. If you elected an isolationist President now or in the future I, for myself, should regard that as inimical to future world peace and as imperilling the lives of my children and my grandchildren. Since when have events affecting all mankind been held to be beyond comment in any nation except that wherein those events occur? Did Americans never comment on Mr. Hitler's goings-on or Mr. Neville Chamberlain's?

Within the past few weeks United States newspapers have widely commented on and, in the words of the *Dallas Morning News*, widely censured Mr. Churchill for seeking a vote of confidence after being defeated on whether or not women should have equal pay with men. This, I suggest, was a purely domestic British issue. You did not hold aloof from it, and I don't complain of that. Comment is free—or should be. New Orleans said the Prime Minister should not have forced that choice on the Commons; "Churchill cracks his whip," said the *Herald-Tribune*; "He was fundamentally wrong," said Oklahoma; Cleveland spoke of "this arrogance in home affairs"; Atlanta said Mr. Churchill had done himself and his party great harm, and Savannah had an article on Mr. Eden as the next Prime Minister. Louisville said the British political truce wears thin, and that Mr. Churchill's attitude was that of a "weary and somewhat disheartened man." The *St. Louis Star-Times* said it was too bad that because of stupid censorship most Americans were unaware of this drift in British politics. Many United States journals approved of what Mr. Churchill had done, but few refrained from commenting and saying frankly what they thought. How does this square with resentment at British comment on your Presidential Elections? It does not square at all.

When English newspapers referred to the flirtation with Darlan in North Africa they were said to be sniping at General Eisenhower; Americans showed much dislike of it; but to-day

American sniping at Lord Louis Mountbatten and our army in Burma is pretty widespread. The *Boston Globe* on March 14th, when extolling in its leading article the work of your General Stilwell in Burma, ended: "To compare this military feat with the slow advance of the British-Indian forces towards Akyab may seem unfair. Yet the comparison is inescapable. Stilwell's handful of soldiers and road builders seek to save China by re-opening her supply line. Lord Louis Mountbatten's gigantic army is concerned with the reconquest of imperial preserves. Does this explain the difference?" On April 11th, in the same journal, Mr. Fletcher Pratt, a columnist, returned to the attack, ending his article: "In other words, the British India Government is still fighting to restore the Empire as it was, not to beat the enemy." I was with our army in Burma for a brief time, and I should say Mr. Pratt's statement is great nonsense, but my point is this: Suppose English journalists were to animadvert on an American army in this critical fashion? Can anybody imagine Americans enduring it with equanimity? The *Journal-American*, on April 7th, 1944, published a feature article by Krishnalal Shridharani, illustrated by a large picture of a child and mother said to be dying of starvation in a Calcutta street. The writer said, among other things, that "the unprecedented appointment of an Australian, R. G. Casey, as the Governor of Bengal has heightened the suspicion in India that the British Tories are lining up even the Dominions in order to maintain India as a Colony"; and again: "The war in Asia deserves the highest priority, and it should be conducted under American leadership in order to offset the unpopularity of other partners."

To do justice to the *Chicago Tribune* would require a good deal of space. On March 29th this journal said: "Our soldiers [in England] may be unhappy, but they may console themselves with the thought that they are doing more for the British than merely winning the war for them. Our men overseas are going to vote . . . [in] England, where there is no written constitution to safeguard the people's rights; where Parliament is unchecked; where men can be held in jail indefinitely without trial, and where elections can be dispensed with." On the same day: "Americans refuse to accept the British view that the military are a superior class entitled to rule and instruct the common people." On March 30th, under the heading, "Overtaxed Executives," they said: "Perhaps Mr. Churchill can lighten his load . . . [the meaning was by leaving military decisions to military men] and also by strengthening his war cabinet by getting an abler man as Foreign Secretary."



But this newspaper grows enraged at any British comment on the American scene. During the past six months Colonel McCormick, who owns it, has delivered himself of some remarkable pronouncements, including one that we English are trying to upset the American Republic, that a transfer of territories ought to take place to balance Lend-Lease (he ignores the fact that 10 per cent. of the British war effort goes in Reverse Lend-Lease, and that we have given America several inventions, including the jet-propelled aircraft), and that after the last war he, McCormick, assisted the U.S. War Department in drawing up plans for the defence of Detroit against attack by the British. This latter puts a stamp on most of the anti-British remarks he makes.

How far Lord Keynes ever influenced President Roosevelt in his financial judgments I've no idea, but I, personally, could wish that Keynes had exercised more weight on *our* Government at the time when they did nothing for the unemployed but keep them standing idle at the street corner drawing the dole and rotting both in body and soul. Shall we not fight the Japs? Are we not fighting them now? Are not some of our warships already in the Pacific? Have we not as much cause to hate and destroy the Japanese as you have? I believe so. We shall certainly be "Over there."

As for why Mr. Churchill said, "Give us the tools and we'll finish the job," I thought it mistaken at the time; I never saw how our Commonwealth could do it all unaided. I remember saying to a distinguished American war correspondent in Arras in 1939 that, in my view, this war was America's as much as Britain's. He and I both fought in the last war; we were in Arras again going over the old battlefields. I said: "I can see no reason why my boy should be killed any more than yours. It's the same war against the same folk after a twenty years' armistice." He didn't like it, and didn't accept it. I believe he accepts it now.

I am aware that this almost monosyllabic reply to criticisms of us leaves much untouched. The Southern Irish, for instance. At least twice since I came to America I have found myself, as an Englishman, defending Eire to irate Irishmen, for they were ignorant both of the number of Southern Irish fighting in our armed forces and the distinction a good many of them have won. Facts can be very different from general impressions. But, at all events, Americans who bitterly resent—as I resent—the presence of German and Japanese Consuls and agents in Eire,

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imperilling, as they think, American soldiers' lives, must be conscious now that two sides exist in Anglo-Irish affairs.

We British are deeply grateful to America for what you have done for us. We do not forget, and shall never forget, that within six days of the fall of France the first of those 80,000 machine-guns you sent us, the first of those millions of rounds of ammunition, and old French 75s, reached our shores. That was the time when Mr. Churchill delivered himself of that defiant cry that we would fight on the beaches and in the streets and on the hills, and would never surrender; and then, I believe, he added *sotto voce*: "And we will hit them over the head with bottles, for we have nothing else." We are deeply grateful to you. I hope you are a little grateful to us also. We stood, and the earth abided. In our gratitude to you, we have, I think, flattered too much, appeased too much. I don't think you like it. I think you are suspicious of it, wonder what we are after, what our ulterior motive is. Why should we flatter you? We have been in the war two years longer, our soldiers do their work for one-third the pay of yours, our workmen in our factories usually work longer hours—also for one-half to one-third the pay; our food is lamentably small compared with yours, your rationing is, in most ways, a farce compared with ours; we have conscripted grandmothers—and your labour leaders assert a National Service Act in America would be slavery.

We are fighting the same foe, but inequalities between us remain very great. Our respective Governments, did they exercise more common sense and vision, could prevent some, at least, of the founts of satire and irony. I am thinking of medals—we give too few, and you are lavish. We have men who fought off the German bombers in the Battle of Britain who have no ribbon to wear; your own lads, so soon as they have won their wings alongside ours in Texas, put up two or three ribbons. We need a common medal for campaigns fought side by side.

The need for interpretation between our two nations remains very great. Ignorance is deep. Films can do much, and do. An equitable balance between American pictures on our screens and British pictures on yours is desirable. I do not think such a balance exists. Something between 30 and 40 per cent. of America's revenue from pictures is drawn from the British Isles. Yet during the past twelve months hardly one British film made by British capital in Britain has been bought by America. When

British films are shown, they tend to be shown in the smaller theatres. True, we make some indifferent pictures, but not all are indifferent. We are ourselves to blame for not being tougher; we have a powerful bargaining weapon in that 30 to 40 per cent. I spoke of; we don't seem to be using it. We had better use it—our good relationship depends, in part, on your seeing more British films and getting to know us better. The commercial gentlemen of Hollywood have something of a stranglehold on your screens. It would, in my view, be for the good of unity among the Allies and ultimately for world peace, that the magnificent series of films made for the United States army, beginning with *Prelude to War* and going on through *Divide and Conquer*, *The Nazis Strike*, *Battle of Britain*, *Battle of Russia*, *Know your Ally Britain*, *Battle of China*, *Negro Soldier*, should be seen by the vast American public. With rare and isolated exceptions, that has not happened. It is always simple for film magnates to argue that documentaries don't pay, that the public won't go to see them. In the main, they've had precious little chance. But must the final test always be dollars and cents when the lives of our sons and grandsons are at stake? Those are American films made by Americans. Nobody who saw them could pretend any longer that America is fighting Britain's war.

Between allies there must be equality, or as near it as we can get. If we are criticised, we must be given the power of reply. To give an example, on March 11th, 1944, the *Tulsa Tribune* said: "We will work together and fight together if England is smart enough to let us. Anti-British feeling is made in England, and not here. The way to stop it is to stop the English from messing in our political business. . . . The English have always been a parasitic people. They have always lived off others. . . . Smart England flung her red belt of Empire round the world to sap the substance from other lands to feed England and maintain her titled classes. . . . The Atlantic Charter is nothing to England. . . . It was never anything but fourth term propaganda endorsed by Churchill. . . . In England a boy is born to be a butler . . . There is no Log Cabin to 10 Downing Street. . . . The English are notoriously an ill-mannered lot. . . . We want to be England's friend . . . we want England to be friendly with us and help us. . . . We have no desire to meddle in their politics, but the insolent English are very busy right now telling us whom we should elect to handle our domestic affairs. . . . We are democratic. . . . England is not democratic. . . . England wants us to keep Roosevelt because it is her guess

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he has committed us to favours to England, and England cannot long live without favours. . . .”

It would destroy the writer's argument somewhat, I suppose, were he to concede that our former Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, began life in a stone cottage at Lossiemouth, or that Herbert Morrison is a policeman's son; or that ours is the Mother of Parliaments; or that the Monroe Doctrine was always underwritten by the British Navy—although the American people were never told so (Walter Lippmann makes the point in his book, *U.S. Foreign Policy*).

It isn't easy to know what to do with attacks of this sort, which can bring no displeasure to Dr. Goebbels. But I doubt if they should be ignored. I do not believe our host of American friends would wish us to ignore these attacks either even though they are off-set from time to time by support from American stalwarts on our side. My own view is that the English should hit back, and hit hard—fairly, but hard. When we do not, our traducers are encouraged to believe we have no answer, that our conscience is bad and our case is bad. Neither is the fact. When we are gentle it strikes you as furtive. If some of you attack us on India, I can see no reason why we should not remind you of your Negro problem. When some of you say we are not democratic, you might be called on to recollect that, at all events, every British subject in Britain can vote, but that hundreds of thousands of your own citizens cannot. Americans who attack us may resent this on our part, but I would humbly suggest that they had better get used to it. Boxers who give punches must expect to take some in return, and to keep their tempers when doing so. We British need to copy three things from you—warm friendliness, frankness, toughness.

Our appeasement of America leads some of you to feel you are very noble to be fighting in Europe, that it is our war you are engaged in once more, that these awful English have taken you for a ride for a second time, and that when the fighting is done you will be well entitled and justified in withdrawing once again to your mountain top, there to look down, cold and aloof, on a hideous, mad world. If that were to be so, if a majority of the American people—I hope and pray it will not be so—were to emerge from this war holding that view and acting on it, then, in due course and in the devil's time, this monstrous task in which my son and yours are engaged, would have to be done all over again.

That is why it is so important, in my view, that we English

should learn to hit out from time to time, and that you should learn to take the punches. We shall never agree on all points; after all, we are human beings, frail, irritable, selfish. But if we see clearly enough the cost of *not* working together, then we shall compromise and get along. The price of No Compromise is death; death to your sons or grandsons, and to mine.

And yet, I would not have you think that I write the foregoing in anything but sincere regard and, for many Americans, affection. How could it be otherwise? For long months your sons and ours have been fighting, suffering, enduring, dying, and, thank God, triumphing together on the soil of Africa and of Italy. At this very moment the Second Front has opened, and your nation and ours are interlocked as Allies breaking down Germany's Atlantic Wall. The task has been superbly begun.

At this solemn time you and we are very close to one another. You do not loathe and abominate war more than we do. We parents, wives, brothers, sons, lovers, have the same apprehension and the same catch at the heart as you. The agony of mind of those of you who watch and wait is our agony also.

When the war in Europe is ended, our men will stream across the world to fight with you in the Pacific—indeed, a good many are already there. It may be that hosts of our soldiers and airmen will pass through the United States, and that you will grow familiar with them, and they with you. If that happens, you will learn what they are made of better than I or anybody else can tell you. The result is beyond doubt: they will like you, and you will like them. You will find that the traducers' tongues have lied; our men on their part will find a kindness they have seldom known.

Thus it may be that the last fight against our last enemy will finish what has been begun—the binding of our two peoples in a closer bond than has hitherto existed. If that is so, and if we think hard enough and strive hard enough, a light that spreads may break over the horizon and an era may dawn in which monstrous wars will, in the end, be no more.

